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## THE FEDERAL LAND POLICY AND MINNESOTA POLITICS, 1854-60

WHATEVER THE CAUSES elsewhere in the United States for the great political upheaval of 1860 and the election of Abraham Lincoln, the first Republican president, the decision in Minnesota turned upon distinctly local and western issues relating directly to the federal land policy, rather than upon such matters as Negro slavery. And of the many questions involving the public domain and the settler, two in particular stand out—the operation of railroad land grants and the sale and distribution of lands under the pre-emption system.

From every standpoint the period from 1854 to 1860 was one of the most critical in the history of Minnesota. The launching of the territorial government in 1849 had occurred amid generally favorable conditions. Economic life, though simple and frugal, was good, and a happy and optimistic spirit prevailed. However, the unprecedented expansion of the Minnesota frontier in the early 1850's, which was well under way by 1854, though at first viewed with great enthusiasm, introduced many new problems.

The very name "Minnesota" was everywhere at the moment synonymous with riches and opportunities. An advertising campaign, extending even to some of the nations of the Old World, had been started; its objective was to "sell" this last portion of the Old Northwest to settlers. How effective the campaign was proving is indicated by the fact that by 1854 thousands of immigrants—men, women, and children of almost every creed and race—were surging into the region.

Those who watched the phenomenal growth of Minnesota in the 1850's saw the movement assume the character and the dimensions of a boom. Under the impact of this tide of humanity, made up of many racial groups with many points of view, the older and simpler concepts of the frontier rapidly gave way to a more artificial and sophisticated outlook upon life. New communities and townsites sprang up in every direction, newspapers and business enterprises were launched with reckless speed, and governmental activities expanded tremendously. In fact, the area's territorial status lasted less than a decade; and before 1860, Minnesota had become a full-fledged member of the union of states, making its new-found strength felt in national politics.

The horde of immigrants to the region, as might be expected, bombarded the land offices with applications for farms and quickly strained to the breaking point the federal machinery set up to cope with the problem. Land surveyors soon found that their best efforts were insufficient, although the general land office insisted that surveys were keeping pace with the settlers' demands for new lands. Surveys begun in 1847 near the St. Croix River had been extended by 1855 to the lands west of the Mississippi only recently acquired from the Sioux. By the latter date, moreover, six land offices were organized and operating, and within a short time two more were created. Four were located west of the Mississippi. Over four and a half million acres were at least partly surveyed by 1855, and five years later this area had been increased nearly fivefold. Despite this seemingly creditable record, settlers continued to pour into Minnesota, swamping the land officers under an avalanche of claim filings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Minnesota land offices of 1855 were located at Brownsville, Winona, Red Wing, Minneapolis, Sauk Rapids, and Stillwater, according to the *St. Peter Courier* of August 9, 1855. Two years later their number had been increased to eight and they were located at Stillwater, Sauk Rapids, Chatfield, Minneapolis, Faribault, Henderson, Buchanan, and Ojibway. The latter list appears in the *Henderson Democrat* of July 23,

The fact that large numbers of squatters were settling where surveys had not been made gives clear evidence that the machinery for land administration was inadequate. In 1854 Congress took cognizance of this state of affairs in passing legislation which legalized squatter rights by extending the privilege of pre-emption to unsurveyed lands.

Census estimates in 1855 indicate that Minnesota Territory had a population of 40,000, as compared with about 350 in 1840, and 4,500 in 1849, when the territory was organized.<sup>2</sup> Such a growth, naturally enough, tended to create other new problems besides those relating to the operation of the land system. For instance, transportation facilities were proving woefully inadequate. Soon after 1850 agitation for railroads began. By 1857 it had become an incessant clamor, for steamboating had demonstrated its general ineffectiveness, since it could cope successfully with neither cold weather and frozen waterways nor with dry summers and low water. Again in this emergency, Congress acted, passing in 1854 the first railroad land grant law for Minnesota, affecting nearly eight hundred thousand acres of the public domain. This act never became operative, for Congress promptly repealed it when evidences of fraud were discovered on the part of the corporation organized to exploit the grant. The general effect, however, was far-reaching, for the first step had been taken in the direction of the huge Congressional grants soon to come.

In 1857 and many times thereafter, new acts were passed. While they were beneficial in encouraging railroad construction, they served to stimulate many speculative tendencies

1857. For references to the heavy demands for land in Minnesota, see the report of the commissioner of the general land office for 1854, in 33 Congress, 2 session, *House Executive Documents*, no. 1, p. 78, 192 (serial 777). A summary of conditions in 1860 appears in the commissioner's *Report* for that year, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 1:351, 352, 359 (St. Paul, 1921).

and otherwise to complicate the administration of the federal land system.<sup>3</sup> Then, too, the natural tendency after the beginning of the era of railroad land grants was to link inseparably the various problems of land administration and transportation. Since those relating to transportation were especially complicated and frequently resulted in bitter controversies among settlers, railroad companies, local governments, and the federal government, the entire land system was more often than not under suspicion on the Minnesota frontier. Many of the actions and policies of the administration which might have been easily justified under other circumstances were subjected to heated criticism and condemnation.

This attitude of the frontier was reflected as early as 1855 in Governor Willis A. Gorman's annual message to the territorial legislature. Having painted a rosy picture of agricultural, mining, and manufacturing prospects in Minnesota, the governor proceeded to deal with one of the oldest as well as most fundamental of frontier problems—how to facilitate the transportation and marketing of the region's products. His conclusion was that the lack of transportation facilities was partly due to a lack of railroad land grants, but more especially to the harsh provisions of the existing federal land grant policy, which made it impossible for the companies and the local authorities to receive the benefits intended in the Congressional acts. Referring directly to the Minnesota act of 1854, he charged that the federal administration was without intimate knowledge of practical conditions on the frontier and was guilty of interpreting too technically the provisions of the law. He therefore suggested that in the future those responsible for land administration would do well to adopt a more liberal attitude and to view the situation simply as might a single land-

<sup>3</sup> For accounts of the railroad land grants of 1854 and 1857, see Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1: 332-339, 2: 37-43, especially a map, facing p. 38, showing the course of the proposed railroads and grants in Minnesota.



owner who plans to open "a road through his farm to facilitate his taking care of his products."<sup>4</sup>

The governor might have added, using the same analogy, that when, as in this case, the landowner was an absentee and quite unfamiliar with the intimate details of his farm, he would do better to allow the tenant to build the road wherever it would be most useful. For the crux of the issue, not so clearly evident in his message, was that neither the act of 1855 nor land grants of the next few years provided for outright gifts to the railroad corporations for construction purposes. Even more important from the frontier standpoint was the lack of provision for direct jurisdiction by the local government in the operation of such grants. On the contrary, the law set up a form of trusteeship by which the federal government retained ownership and control of the lands under the grant until such a time as there had been substantial compliance with certain specified conditions both by the railroad interests and by the local governmental agencies. After that, the lands passed directly to the railroad corporations.

The objections to this policy were many. The railroads objected because preliminary financing, always a difficult and heavy burden in frontier sections, had to be arranged for without the certainty that the prospective grants would ever be forthcoming, for the grants could not be made unless the railroads met all prescribed conditions successfully within fixed time limits. The settlers objected because lands along railroad rights of way were removed from the operation of the usual land system and no one could be quite sure when or under what terms and conditions farms in these

<sup>4</sup>For the text of Gorman's message, see *Minnesota Council Journal*, 1855, Appendix, p. 3-15. See also Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1: 329-343, 2: 37. Congress almost immediately repealed the act of 1854, and as a result the Minnesota and Northwestern Railroad Company filed a suit which was lost in the Supreme Court. The company sought to compel a performance of the terms of the original grant.

areas could be obtained. If the settler took the chance of squatting upon such a farm, he might some day find himself forced to purchase the land on a cash basis from a railroad company or to give it up because of inability to comply with terms he could not meet. As for the local government, it was obliged to stand by during the tedious delays involved in working out the provisions of the law, meanwhile lacking jurisdiction as well as the capacity to tax and to collect revenues from huge tracts of lands in Minnesota.

The panic of 1857, one of the most general and severe in the history of the country, added still further to the undigested problems of the Minnesota frontier. Railroad development was still in its tender infancy, and outside capital was reluctant to enter a region still in a relatively raw condition. Such companies as had been formed were composed for the most part of local men using local capital. In the first stages of the financial depression, these enterprises quickly collapsed, since they were unable to fulfill the terms of the railroad land grants.

The newly organized state government, faced with the prospect of the bankruptcy of these promising activities and the potential markets and business which they might bring, was impelled to take drastic steps. In the crisis it hit upon a scheme for issuing five million dollars in special bonds, backed by the public credit and circulated without any security except the future expectation of salvaging the railroads and land grants. It was assumed that the day would come when, supported by the state's credit, the companies would begin to move steam locomotives and cars over the prairies of Minnesota, the railroad lands would be open to settlement, and industry would flourish. A revived and prosperous young region then could easily call in the bonds and write off the transaction. Such was the fantasy of the five million dollar loan, conceived in a moment of desperation and confusion.

To secure its ratification by the voters, its sponsors used the strange argument that the state would never be directly responsible for the redemption of the bonds. Rather, said they, the public credit was merely being employed to endorse a promissory note and to guarantee the continuation of a public enterprise the solvency and good name of which was in the interest of the people, who were the real beneficiaries. But the advocates of the bond issue neglected to tell what might happen if the railroads were unable to continue despite this show of public confidence. After some debate, nevertheless, sound economic considerations were ignored and the loan was ratified.

But the depression continued and the worst fears of the minority, which had opposed the questionable scheme, were realized. The railroads went into bankruptcy before even a train was operating, the bonds were defaulted, and a deluded public gave evidence of its disappointment and anger.<sup>5</sup> It was such a situation as logically called for a scapegoat. What more likely object for the public wrath than the public land system? Had not the land officers held out the promise of rich grants of thousands of acres to encourage the frontier railroad builders? And were they not now seeking to hide themselves in a maze of technicalities, contending that the law had not been complied with and refusing to go through with the implied bargain? Certainly, the citizens of Minnesota reasoned, the federal government owed something to the brave men and women who dared to go into the wilderness and to develop new wealth and resources for the nation. And for a government which was wont to call itself a democracy, the role of a Shylock was most unbecoming and contemptible. Those who under these circumstances refused to liberalize the restrictions surrounding the land grants and who insisted upon a strict construction

<sup>5</sup>The story of the "Five Million Dollar Loan" is told in Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 37-58.

of the law were highhanded and unfair, according to the disciples of frontier philosophy.

The abuse heaped upon the administrators of the public land system by a frontier which refused to admit the possibility that its own folly had had much to do with its misfortunes, while directed partly toward the practices involving the land grants, took another and more violent form just at this moment. In truth, the fundamental quarrel between the settlers and the public land administration, which was soon to wreck the Democratic party in Minnesota, in the period between 1857 and 1860 was to revolve particularly about the question of the sale and distribution of lands under the provisions of the general pre-emption law. Strangely enough pre-emption and the policy of public land sales were probably the most thoroughly established and highly regarded of all the elements of the American land system. For years it had been regarded as the most vital part of the machinery of federal administration, and it was so accepted even by the most radical exponents of liberalism. Yet now on the frontier, and especially in Minnesota, the uprising against it became overwhelming—in fact this controversy accounts, more than any other factor, for the growth of Republicanism in the West and the election of Lincoln to the presidency in the fall elections of 1860.

In this connection, it is well to note that in the states and territories containing the federal domain the fight to put land administration upon the most liberal basis possible had been in progress for over half a century. In 1820, for instance, the size of settler claims was reduced to eighty acres and the minimum price per acre was fixed at \$1.25. This reform made it possible for many people, otherwise unable to purchase government land, to take advantage of the opportunities in the West and there to establish new communities and homes. Twenty-one years later, in 1841, after another

period of experimentation in land policy, the general pre-emption act was passed. Its purpose was to award to actual settlers the lands of their choice, provided they established themselves thereon and paid the purchase price at the proper time. The pre-emption system operated to liberalize land policy greatly, and in the period before the Civil War it became truly the basis of the American method for opening and developing the frontier.

When the pre-emption system was extended still further in Minnesota by making pre-emption claims applicable not only to surveyed but to unsurveyed land, many felt, with some justification, that finally the settler had been fully recognized and had been accorded every right and privilege to which he was reasonably entitled. In addition the federal government was liberally making grants in aid of education and internal improvements, as well as for the creation of townsites. Moreover, military land warrants and Indian scrip circulations had been enlarged to a point where it was possible for anyone to secure and use these forms of paper in payment for acreage; in fact, it was an open question whether this liberality was not already unduly encouraging speculation and scandal.<sup>6</sup>

The general feeling that a well-rounded land system had been fully realized was evident as early as 1852, when for a brief period Henry H. Sibley, Minnesota's first delegate to Congress and later its governor, advocated a free homestead law.<sup>7</sup> He ceased his efforts in this direction shortly afterward, however, when it became clear that immigration was flowing without apparent obstruction into Minnesota Territory. Possibly 100,000 people entered the portals to this promised land between 1855 and 1857, and it was en-

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Donaldson, *The Public Domain*, 205, 214-216, 223-237, 289, 298-305 (Washington, 1880).

<sup>7</sup> Donaldson, *Public Domain*, 332. The bill for free homesteads, which was supported by Sibley as a "favorite with the masses of the people," is discussed in the *Minnesota Pioneer* (St. Paul) for September 23, 1852.

thusiastically claimed in the latter year that the total population had reached a figure of 247,500.<sup>8</sup> Though this was an exaggeration, the estimate was used when Minnesota applied for statehood as the basis for its apportionment and division into legislative districts. Under the circumstances, a land policy the operation of which permitted so substantial a growth in the brief space of time between the organization of the territorial and state governments could hardly be made to appear harsh and reactionary.

But the psychology of the Minnesota frontier, especially after the effects of the panic of 1857 began to be felt, was such that the land system was unsparingly criticized by a large majority of its inhabitants. Land speculators, who had once been regarded with high public esteem as promoters of the common good, fell from grace and became a hated class. Placed in practically the same category, the public land officers now also were exiled from a frontier society which formerly had held them in a most favorable light.

In this connection the federal policy regarding public land sales has a significance that may be easily overlooked in favor of other, but certainly not more dramatic, evidence by those seeking to explain the political revolution of the late 1850's in Minnesota. The public sale was always an important feature of the land system. After the passage of the general pre-emption law, it assumed a place of even greater distinction in the operation of the federal policy. In the late 1850's, a settler locating on unsurveyed land was required to do only one thing when he took a claim—to announce publicly at the nearest land office what he was doing. To be sure, he could not yet accurately describe his claim according to section, township, and range, but only by approximate metes and bounds, making reference to known geographical features. But a general description was suf-

<sup>8</sup> Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 1.

ficient to constitute a legal record of his status as a pre-emptor.

After the land in question was surveyed, a second act was required within three months of the date of the receipt of the survey plats in the land office. This was the filing of a "declaration of intention" with the local land officers, setting forth the settler's position as a pre-emptor and giving a legal description of his claim in accordance with now legally recorded information of the survey. If the settler, on the other hand, were pre-empting land already under survey at the time of his first residence upon it, the declaration of intention was the first step for him to take. In either case, however, he was, strictly speaking, a squatter until the actual date of the sale of his land at public auction. Thus he had certain potential legal rights as well as the privilege of living upon the soil of his choice and of using it in the intervening period just as if it were his property in fee simple. Especially did he have the right to farm it and to put upon it such improvements as he wished.

The fixing of the time for the public land sale under the pre-emption law, it should be emphasized, was not a matter of any established rule of the calendar, but it was rather an executive and discretionary prerogative solely within the powers given to the president of the United States. For the settler pre-emptor living upon land which he perhaps had farmed for several months or even years and upon which he might have made extensive improvements, the sale was of utmost importance. For in return for an arrangement with the federal government granting him as a pre-emptor the privilege of purchasing his claim ahead of all others at the minimum price asked at any time before the public sale, he agreed to forfeit his pre-emptor's rights if for any reason, financial or otherwise, he was unable within the limits and conditions of the law to exercise them.

It was usually the custom to set the date of sale as soon as possible after the completion of the final surveys. The

president might, however, take other facts into consideration, such as the general economic condition of the settlers. In any event, his action was almost invariably based upon the recommendations of the department of the interior and land officers; and efficient administration under ordinary circumstances required that the title in fee simple pass to the settler at an early date. There were other factors to consider, such as the inability of the local government to derive taxable revenue from the land until it had passed into private ownership. When economic conditions on the frontier were good, the settler might willingly accept the responsibilities of a taxpayer in his adopted community. If the contrary were true, he was apt to be less anxious to pay taxes.

Thus it will be seen that much depended upon the presidential proclamation, which determined the time and the conditions for the sale of the public lands. The sale not only changed the status of the land from an unoffered to an offered position, but also abrogated any pre-emption claim not exercised before it was opened to bidding. In case there was no offer at public sale, the parcel in question might then be sold later to the first individual willing to pay the minimum price.

Certain interesting practices developed among groups of original squatters to protect what they felt to be their legitimate rights. Protective associations, using some of the methods familiar to modern racketeers, were organized in many communities. Pressure and threats were used to obtain postponements of sales, and land officers sometimes were coerced into making recommendations to their superiors for delays in carrying out executive decisions. If these tactics failed, squatter organizations were likely to try to prevent active bidding at the sale. In extreme cases the settlers assembled at the land office, where they proceeded to intimidate newcomers who showed any disposition to bid. Thus in every way possible, public opinion was di-



rected to vigorous and even violent dissent against any proposal calculated to injure actual occupants of the domain.

The derangement of every form of economic life as a result of the panic of 1857 greatly accentuated the forces of discontent, as well as the settler's determination to prevent the public land sales. The very flexibility of the law proved disastrous to sound administration. The orders of the president were made to appear personal, capricious, and unjust. In the period from 1857 to 1860 this attitude was especially evident, for then, more than at any other time in the history of the pre-emption system, the settler did not want his status to be put in jeopardy; and he knew that if it were, he would not be able to obtain the money with which to purchase his claim. Thus throughout Minnesota a general clamor arose, with demands that the federal government adopt a course which would operate in favor of the bona fide settler and against the land speculator.

The practice of postponing land sales after the issuing of a presidential proclamation began as early as 1855.<sup>9</sup> In that year approximately five and a quarter million acres were advertised, but when the date of sale arrived, hardly a fifth of the total was offered at auction. The rest of the lands were withdrawn, despite the fact that some had been surveyed for nearly five years.<sup>10</sup> From 1850 to 1860, al-

<sup>9</sup> For the provisions and executive interpretations of the pre-emption system with its various legal ramifications, see W. W. Lester, *Decisions of the Interior Department in Public Land Cases*, 342-465 (Philadelphia, 1860). Among the Minnesota newspapers that published letters and notices relating to the operation of the pre-emption system in the territory are the *Saint Croix Union* (Stillwater) for September 1, 15, and 29, 1855, the *St. Paul Democrat* for September 4, 1855, and the *St. Peter Courier* for October 11, 1855. The latter paper gave its readers the "Good News" of a decision to take lands off the market.

<sup>10</sup> See the report of the commissioner of the general land office for 1855, in 34 Congress, 1 session, *House Executive Documents*, no. 1, p. 155 (serial 840). The "first installment of lands, 1,178,003 acres in the extreme southeastern corner of the state, was offered for sale" in 1855, according to Folwell, *Minnesota*, 1:354. The *St. Peter Courier* for August 9, 1855, gives the number of acres offered at each of six land offices as follows: Brownsville, 2,481,395 acres; Winona, 1,540,912; Red Wing, 686,000;

though nearly twenty million acres were surveyed, less than four million were actually offered at public sale. Such a situation, outwardly, did not indicate a governmental policy out of touch with the problems of the frontier nor a disposition to insist upon a strict construction of the pre-emption act. What, therefore, was the real cause of the bitter and far-reaching revolt that arose from a condition so innocent in appearance? The answer is to be found not in what the administrators of the land system eventually decided to do, but rather in the provocative manner used and in the uncertainties created before they arrived at their decisions. In truth, it is safe to conclude that a firm and perhaps harsher attitude, administered dispassionately and permitting no delays, would have produced less criticism and unrest than the exasperatingly dilatory methods adopted by the Buchanan Democrats. At least each settler then would have known precisely where he stood in relation to his government. But such was not to be the case.

Time and again after 1855, land sales were announced, only to be postponed. Invariably upon these occasions the frontier rose in revolt, hurling the charge that the administration was in league with the speculators. These "vultures," it was argued, would of course like to buy farms improved by hard-working settlers who had put all their resources into their development. Another indictment of the Buchanan administration was that its dog-in-the-manger attitude toward public land sales was motivated by a deliberate desire to make political capital out of the situation thus created. The frontier bitterly charged that the administration, having put the settler "on the spot" by threatening to sell his farm when he was unable to pay for it, was bent upon forcing the voters to support it at the polls as the price for the withdrawal of the presidential order proclaim-

Minneapolis, 169,255; Sauk Rapids, 257,759; and Stillwater, 151,374. For additional references to land sales, see the *Courier* of August 23 and October 11, 1855.

ing the sales. Such allegations were, to be sure, vigorously denied.

In the meantime the local Democratic chieftains, more than a little bewildered by the violence of the demonstration against the party in power, but fearful too of the consequences to themselves if they failed to heed their constituents, were usually content to defend halfheartedly the principles of pre-emption and the sale of public lands, and to call attention to the fact that it was by means of this system that many parts of the West had been settled in record time. History, said they, had proved its fairness. Nevertheless, most of these leaders, when the sales were proclaimed, exerted their best efforts to persuade the administration to give way. Such tactics of course were politically inept and won no new friends for Democracy in Minnesota. On the other hand, the new Republican party leaders quickly saw the advantage of denouncing the opposition's land policy. The promise to get rid of land sales altogether tended likewise to build up Republican prestige, and the adoption of the homestead principles for them became a natural step.

As the Democrats lost ground, the emotional elements in the situation resulted still further in solidifying the party's defense of the principles of pre-emption. After all, pre-emption was the cardinal tenet of the national land system, and had been for many years; it had been proved, tested, and protected by the Democratic party as its own. Evidence of this stiffening attitude of the administration in defense of the time-honored land system is to be found in the position taken by the secretary of the interior in 1860 when replying to Governor Ramsey's request for the postponement of sales announced for that year. "Is it just," asked the secretary, "that the entire burden of State taxation should fall upon that portion of her people who dwell in those parts of the state where the public lands have been brought into market, whilst another portion settled upon unoffered public

lands, are relieved from any share in such burdens?" He answered his own question in the negative. "My convictions of duty as a public officer, compel me to adhere strictly to the regular administration of the land laws." He admitted that the past decade of timid and indecisive application of the principles of the public sale of lands was one of "which neither my predecessor or myself will ever boast."<sup>11</sup> The secretary's stand was significant because it indicated an unequivocal defense of the administration's policy and it was altogether logical in view of many years of allegiance to the principal of pre-emption. It had, of course, become inexpedient for Washington longer to yield to the stentorian demands of the western radicals. To have done so would have been interpreted as complete surrender, for it could hardly have been construed otherwise. Suffice it to say that this last-ditch stand of old party leaders did not save the Democratic forces from a crushing and final defeat in the fall elections of 1860.

In Minnesota the homestead proposal had become an active issue in the late 1850's, largely, as may be surmised, as a result of the situation created in connection with the proclamations of public land sales. No longer did it matter to the western settlers that crisis after crisis resulted in victories for them. They were now thoroughly aroused by the questionable strategy of the land officers in continually reviving obnoxious issues. Moreover, they were disgusted with insinuations from men in high public office, like the secretary of the interior, to the effect that they were parasites, willing to accept the generousities of a benevolent government but unwilling to accept their responsibilities as taxpayers and citizens. Their answer to this argument was that the entire destiny of the frontier was in their hands.

<sup>11</sup> J. Thompson to Ramsey, October 4, 1860, Governor's Archives, in the custody of the Minnesota Historical Society. The secretary's letter, consisting of five manuscript pages, is a carefully prepared defense of the administration's land policy, particularly of the practice of public sales.

Were they not developing its raw resources, and thus benefiting the entire nation? Instead of exacting Caesar's tribute from them, let a grateful people give them outright the lands which they cultivated and so recognize the importance of their contribution to the national welfare.

With righteous indignation, the frontiersman asked what good could possibly come from the practice of proclaiming public land sales year after year and then, usually at the last possible moment, withdrawing or postponing them. Was not the only result that of keeping the settlers in a constant state of turmoil and discontent? Did it serve any good purpose? To these questions, the Minnesota settlers could answer only with a vigorous vote in the negative.

Confronted with this issue and aware of the aroused state of the frontier, the Democratic party and its leader, President Buchanan, showed a total lack of understanding of the position of the settlers. Failing to see that the chief interest of the West was the land, they also chose to ignore the fact that, in so far as the settler was concerned, his most vital problem was the protection of his status upon the land, by lawful means if possible, but in any event, by whatever means were for him most effective. Individualistic to the point of obsession, he would not, if he could avoid it, be placed in a position where he was the victim of the whims and fancies of men hundreds of miles away. Such was not his interpretation of the American way of life. As he saw his problem, if he controlled the land of his choice, he was a free man; if he did not, then no matter how kind a paternalistic government might from time to time be to him, he was still a serf or a slave.

The hold of the Democratic party upon the country, as might be expected, was not easily broken, for it had long been in power and had developed many devices for extending and maintaining its influence with the voters. Thus the settlement of the land issue required a terrific struggle — a

battle fought out largely in the years 1858, 1859, and 1860. The annual report of the secretary of the interior for 1858, for instance, presented an elaborate defense of the existing policy with reference to the public domain. By this method, it was pointed out, the West had been settled and developed from the very beginning of frontier expansion. It was a system of many virtues, according to its exponents, and it was peculiarly American, since it was based upon the proposition that the "public domain is the property of the people of all the states collectively." Thus, "any individual desiring to appropriate to himself any particular portion of it, is allowed to do so by paying into the common treasury a moderate consideration." The secretary was willing to concede that the holding of public land sales in the previous year, had the order not been rescinded, would have resulted in unjustified hardships on the settlers; nevertheless, "as a liberal indulgence has already been afforded . . . it is contemplated to bring into open market several millions of acres during the ensuing year."<sup>12</sup>

This warning of the crisis to come was followed in the spring of 1859 by a new proclamation of public land sales, despite the concerted efforts of party leaders in Minnesota to avoid the renewal of a battle which, they felt, could result in nothing except a greater schism in their ranks. Even the *Henderson Democrat*, an ardent administration sheet, on March 9 carried a story of the efforts of the state's party chieftains and Congressional delegation, led by Senator James Shields, to persuade the president not to commit a political blunder. According to the *Democrat*, Shields stated "that notwithstanding all . . . efforts to prevent it, the department [of the interior] seems determined to bring our lands into the market." The senator urged the people

<sup>12</sup> Quoted from the report of the secretary of the interior for 1858, in 35 Congress, 2 session, *Senate Executive Documents*, no. 1, p. 73-75 (serial 974).

of the state to support their appointed representatives in this fight, and to let the "President know the ruin his policy will bring upon our country." The *Democrat*, as well as the citizens of Minnesota, it is hardly necessary to add, "with one voice" approved these sentiments. Throughout the frontier, mass meetings were held and resolutions denouncing the proposed sales were drawn up and forwarded to Washington. Thousands of men who had always voted a straight ticket joined in the crusade, and "Moccasin Democracy" was bitterly attacked.

Among the most distinguished of the critics of the land policy was a Minnesota woman, Jane Grey Swisshelm, editor of the *St. Cloud Democrat*. Seizing the occasion as one well worth her best efforts, she went into action with a fiery editorial on August 11. Insisting that with financial conditions as they were but few settlers could raise the money to pay for their farms, she denounced the "great injustice to them and injury to the State at large" from "these sales." As for the local land officers at St. Cloud, who apparently had lost their standing with her, she sarcastically referred to them as those "chivalrous sons of the 'sunny South'" who gracefully had "volunteered to hold our offices and control our politics." These, moreover, she accused of speculating in land warrants and of seeking to gain votes for Buchanan out of an emergency which they had helped to perpetrate upon the poor settlers.

In that same tense summer of 1859, the state Republican platform, with a display of literary talent that would have done credit to Mrs. Swisshelm herself, advocated "land for the landless versus niggers for the niggerless." Then proceeding straight to the heart of the land problem, it resolved that the Democratic administration, in ordering a sale of public lands at a time of financial distress and general poverty and embarrassment, was "inflicting a fearful wrong" upon the state and its settlers by "turning over to

the remorseless speculator the fruits" of honest industry and toil.<sup>13</sup>

Under this onslaught, the Democrats became even more divided and weakened. Through the activity of Christopher C. Graham, one of their leaders, who was a land officer as well as a candidate for Congress, a petition was circulated calling attention to the tactical blunder in the sale of lands in the existing circumstances. Graham easily obtained a large number of signers and sent the petition to Washington, where it was personally presented to the president by Governor Henry H. Sibley of Minnesota. This pressure from leaders of the Democratic party itself at length influenced Buchanan to retract his decision in ordering the sales. In the same year, however, came the memorable action of Galusha Grow in sponsoring in Congress not only a homestead bill, but a measure to postpone for ten years all public land sales.<sup>14</sup> Had the administration seen fit to throw its support behind these proposals, the party in power, even at that late hour, might have been able to save its position in the public land states. But its course had been charted, and there was to be no deviation from it, even to stave off ultimate defeat in the national election of 1860.

Notwithstanding the president's attitude of stubborn adherence to a policy that had outlived its usefulness, in a spirit of revolt Congress passed a homestead bill in 1860. A presidential veto was inevitable.<sup>15</sup> But later events were

<sup>13</sup> The Republican state convention was held in St. Paul on July 21. The sections of the Republican platform from which these passages are quoted appear in the *St. Cloud Democrat* for August 25, 1859.

<sup>14</sup> *St. Cloud Democrat*, September 8, 1859. The editor greeted Graham's petition with the remark, "Well, the Bogus Democracy are scared at last."

<sup>15</sup> *St. Cloud Democrat*, June 28, 1860; *Henderson Democrat*, May 19, July 7, 28, 1860. The latter paper explained and attempted to justify the presidential veto, and it published a bitter attack upon Stephen A. Douglas as the man really responsible for the government's blundering land policy.



to prove that this Congressional victory was already sounding the death knell of Democracy. What was not so clear, perhaps, was the fact that the issue of the public land sale, through the decision to provide a substitute for it in the homestead measure, also was passing from the scene as an active political question.

In the face of a serious revolt within his party's ranks, it is somewhat difficult to see what advantage Buchanan hoped to gain by once more making a trial of strength in the matter of the land sales. It was clear during the winter of 1859-60, however, that the president would ignore the experiences of previous years. By midsummer of 1860, new proclamations had been issued and the battle was on. This time there was little hope that the administration would abandon its purposes, but, despite the dread of what might be in store for them, the settlers once more covered every point of argument in their resolutions of denunciation. These followed patterns that are already familiar. In the meantime, the rural papers from one end of Minnesota to the other worked themselves into a state of frenzy such as had never before been witnessed over any public question. The *Henderson Democrat*, which had been loyal to Buchanan even when it disagreed with him over the issue of land sales, now was completely at a loss to explain, much less to defend, the president's strange determination. Finally, it abandoned any attempt to do so.<sup>16</sup> Its decision was typical of the majority of the Democrats, who at this point were being forced to choose between loyalty to their party and to Minnesota and its general welfare. It was a distasteful choice, but it had to be made.

<sup>16</sup> *Henderson Democrat*, August 19, 1860. Even at this late date the editor of the *Democrat* was justifying Buchanan and appealing to his readers to be fair with the administration's land policy. By September 8 this Democratic organ was yielding to frontier pressure for the homestead bill, though it again attacked Douglas as an enemy of western land aspirations.

Under the circumstances, there could be but one answer. When the fall election came, there was no equivocation. Minnesota voted a decisive majority in support of Abraham Lincoln. And a land-conscious frontier, battling valiantly for what it believed to be its heritage, was vindicated.

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## EARLY MINNESOTA AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES AND FAIRS<sup>1</sup>

ONE OF THE INSTITUTIONS deeply ingrained in the pattern of American life is the agricultural fair. Anyone who saw the motion picture "State Fair," starring the late Will Rogers, will appreciate better than through descriptive words how many families anticipate and enjoy the fair. Some people feel that such exhibitions are outmoded, that they are carry-overs from an earlier age, yet the tenacity with which they have hung on to the present day attests their importance even in modern society. Two eminent scholars have asserted that "No institution, perhaps, has exerted greater influence upon American rural life than the agricultural fair."<sup>2</sup>

In Minnesota fairs are older than the state itself, having "made their appearance . . . in the early 1850's," just at the zenith of the golden age of such institutions in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Compared with later exhibitions the early fairs were primitive indeed, yet they more than justified their existence. They gave the isolated pioneer farmer a chance to meet his fellows, to have a good time; and by showing him late developments in machinery, fine livestock, and new techniques in farming, they gave him an incentive to improve his own farming. As one writer has remarked, until about 1870 "the whole burden of agricultural experimentation, instruction, extension and recreation fell upon the agricul-

<sup>1</sup> This is an expanded version of a paper presented before the luncheon session of the nineteenth state historical convention under the auspices of the Minnesota Historical Society at St. Peter on July 26, 1941. *Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> See H. J. Carman and R. G. Tugwell's foreword in Wayne C. Neely, *The Agricultural Fair*, 2 (New York, 1935).

<sup>3</sup> Rodney C. Loehr, ed., *Minnesota Farmers' Diaries*, 24 (St. Paul, 1939); Neely, *Agricultural Fair*, 82.

tural societies whose work was carried on mainly through State and local fairs."<sup>4</sup>

In the period before 1870 fairs were primarily educational, and amusement features were secondary or were subordinated to the instructional motive. Stock and crop exhibits and judging were the main features of most fairs and the exchange of experiences by dirt farmers and lectures by experts played important parts. Also necessary was the annual address, delivered by the most renowned figure available. These addresses were usually flowery, elevating agriculture to a lofty pinnacle and praising it as the noblest of pursuits. Such discourses might not have helped a farmer earn more money or raise better crops, but they probably made his chest swell with pride when he thought about his calling.<sup>5</sup>

But early fairs were not "all work and no play." Concerning the medieval counterparts of later fairs, it has been written: "If the booths of the foreign merchants were of interest, even more so were the minstrels and jongleurs, the acrobats and trained animals, the magicians and human freaks, all for the amazement and amusement of the public." And it may be logically surmised that Minnesota farmers of the 1850's and 1860's attended fairs to have a good time as well as to learn. Plowing matches, reaper trials, and ladies' riding exhibitions were popular, and, although frowned upon by many, the horse race was a regular feature of many fairs. At the Washington County Fair of 1875 persons interested in amusement features could witness a pigeon shoot, a walking contest, a foot race, a baseball game, and a boat race.<sup>6</sup> But whether primarily educational

<sup>4</sup> Earle D. Ross, "The Evolution of the Agricultural Fair in the Northwest," in *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 24:454 (July, 1926).

<sup>5</sup> Ross, in *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 24:453-458; James E. Child, *History of Waseca County*, 233 (Owatonna, 1905). William Brisbane delivered the address at the Waseca County Fair of 1870, dwelling upon the wholesome and honorable calling of the farmer.

<sup>6</sup> Louis L. Snyder, *A Survey of European Civilization*, 1:483 (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1941); *Stillwater Messenger*, October 1, 1875.

or recreational, most fairs seemed to have a common feature—financial stringency. In fact, state aid for local agricultural societies, the sponsors of the fairs, was not made available until 1868.

There is some difference of opinion as to when the first agricultural society was organized in Minnesota. Some authorities and at least one early newspaper agree that the first move toward the organization of such a society was made in the winter of 1852 in Benton County, mainly near Watab.<sup>7</sup> An agricultural society existed as early as 1849, however, for in that year the Saint Anthony Agricultural Association offered prizes in cash or implements for the best crops raised during the ensuing season. For the best crop of Indian corn in a quantity of not less than ten acres a prize of twenty-five dollars was to be given, and for wheat, one of fifty dollars was offered. Contenders for the prizes were to make proof before a justice of the peace, a judge, or a notary before January 1, 1851.<sup>8</sup> The nature of this association and the success of the crop contest, however, are unknown.

But the date of the formation of the first agricultural society in Minnesota is of little interest except to the antiquarian. Of greater significance are the number of societies active during the 1850's, their location, and the work they did. Some of the first societies naturally were organized in the counties that had the greatest population densities in the early 1850's—counties such as Benton, Ramsey, and Hennepin.

The Benton County society was incorporated by an act of the legislature approved on March 5, 1852. There were ten charter members, among whom was Oliver H. Kelley of Granger movement fame. Most of the members were fur

<sup>7</sup> Darwin S. Hall and Return I. Holcombe, *History of the Minnesota State Agricultural Society from Its First Organization in 1854 to the Annual Meeting of 1910*, 7 (St. Paul, 1910); *Minnesota Pioneer* (St. Paul), November 10, 1853.

<sup>8</sup> *Pioneer*, November 15, 1849.

traders, but the formation of the society inspired the editor of an eastern farm journal to write:

Those who have not lately visited the far west, can hardly credit the statement, that in a region so recently a wilderness, there already exists a fully-organized and flourishing society of men, deeply interested in the growth and success of agricultural industry. But such is the fact.<sup>9</sup>

On March 6, 1852, the Ramsey County Agricultural Society received a legislative charter, and it held its first meeting on April 10. Listed among its members were editors, a minister, politicians, a barber, and other urbanites who believed that the organization of agricultural societies was an excellent way to advertise the resources of Minnesota to the outside world.<sup>10</sup>

The Hennepin County Agricultural Society was chartered by the territorial legislature on March 5, 1853. The prime mover behind the organization was Colonel John H. Stevens, and the first meeting of the society was held at the courthouse in St. Anthony on September 7, 1853. A large audience heard addresses by various notables and decided to hold a fair in October, 1853. The fair of 1853 did not materialize, but in October, 1854, the Hennepin County society actually did hold a fair, the first such exhibition in the territory, and it proved a success. It was located at what was later known as Bridge Square in Minneapolis. Governor Willis A. Gorman, Ex-governor Alexander Ramsey, and Ex-justice Bradley B. Meeker gave high-sounding addresses, typical of the day, and over fifty exhibitors displayed their wares of grains, roots, vegetables, livestock, poultry, dairy products, fine arts, machinery, ladies' work, and miscellaneous materials. The premiums, amounting

<sup>9</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 7; *American Agriculturist* (New York), 12:201 (June 7, 1854). The latter item is among transcripts, made for the Minnesota Historical Society, of material of Minnesota interest in eastern periodicals.

<sup>10</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 7; *Pioneer*, April 8, 22, 1852.

to several hundred dollars, were all paid—a real accomplishment. It was claimed that the exhibits would have done credit to one of the oldest and richest counties of New York. Some strangers were so impressed that they later became permanent residents of Minnesota. All in all, this first agricultural fair was a valuable advertisement for the territory.<sup>11</sup>

As time went on other county organizations began to appear. Some of the most prominent were the Dodge County Agricultural Society, formed in July, 1856; the Dakota County Agricultural Association, organized on March 20, 1858; the Fillmore County Agricultural Society, also dating from 1858; the Faribault County Agricultural Society, organized at Winnebago City in 1859; and the McLeod County Agricultural Society, which adopted a constitution on March 19, 1859. All these groups suffered early vicissitudes which, however, they were able to weather, and they finally emerged in healthy conditions. The ideals for which they were established—to encourage the importation of blooded stock and the introduction of choice seeds, grains, and fruit trees—ultimately transcended difficulties such as inadequate finances and rivalries among towns concerning fair sites.<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the formation of county societies, the 1850's witnessed the organization of a society to represent the farming interests of all Minnesota. At the first meet-

<sup>11</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 17-19, 27; John H. Stevens, *Personal Recollections of Minnesota and Its People*, 208, 242 (Minneapolis, 1890); *Pioneer*, April 28, September 8, 1853; *St. Anthony Express*, September 17, 1853.

<sup>12</sup> *History of Winona, Olmsted and Dodge Counties*, 1256 (Chicago, 1884); J. A. Kiestler, *History of Faribault County*, 102-110 (Minneapolis, 1896); *Glencoe Register*, March 26, July 23, October 22, 1859; *Dakota County Tribune* (Farmington), March 9, 1934; *Spring Valley Tribune*, August 16, 23, 1934. In 1859 members of the state legislature and others organized at the Capitol the Agricultural and Mechanics' Club of the Legislature of Minnesota, with John H. Stevens as president. Farm problems and agricultural methods were discussed at its meetings. *Weekly Pioneer and Democrat* (St. Paul), December 30, 1859; January 13, 1860.

ing of the Hennepin County Agricultural Society in 1853, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, that this society deems it expedient that there should be a convention held at St. Paul on the first Wednesday of January next, to form a territorial agricultural society; and that other agricultural societies in the territory are respectfully requested to send delegates to said convention.<sup>13</sup>

From this resolution and the action taken in pursuance of it grew the Minnesota Territorial Agricultural Society. The meeting suggested in the resolution was held at St. Paul on January 4 and 5, 1854, and in spite of inclement weather the attendance was good. Delegates from Benton, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Nicollet, Pembina, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington counties were present when the society was organized in the Capitol. Governor Willis A. Gorman was elected president, and Judge A. G. Chatfield made the main address. One of the newspapers said that many of the delegates were practical farmers, and added: "The organization of this Society should be hailed with pleasure, and it is hoped that our farmers and others will give it their unqualified support."<sup>14</sup>

The second annual meeting of the Territorial Agricultural Society was held in the Capitol on January 10, 1855. This gathering was addressed by Henry H. Sibley, who made a plea for a federal bureau of agriculture. He pointed out that the whole subject of husbandry was then committed to the bureau of patents. His plea, of course, was answered in 1862 when the United States department of agriculture was created. The establishment of the department was in no little way the result of the work of various agricultural societies throughout the country. At the 1855 meeting of the territorial society, Stevens was elected president and it

<sup>13</sup> Stevens, *Personal Recollections*, 208; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 19.

<sup>14</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 19; William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 1:361 (St. Paul, 1922); *Pioneer*, November 10, 1853; January 5, 12, 1854.



was decided to hold a fair. It was impossible, however, for the society alone to raise the necessary funds, so the fair held at Minneapolis on October 17 and 18 was sponsored jointly by the territorial and the Hennepin County societies.<sup>15</sup>

This first fair was truly a success. Newspapers stated that it drew the largest crowd of whites ever assembled in the territory and that many ladies were present. People from as far away as the James River, west of Big Stone Lake, attended. There were excellent exhibits of grain, vegetables, and livestock, and for the first time in the upper Mississippi region the dairy interest was represented. A good display of cheese, made by Mrs. Joel B. Bassett of Minneapolis, was among the entries. On the other hand, only three counties exhibited products at the fair—Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington. Among the horses entered, Morgans were the most popular, a stallion and a colt of this breed winning first premiums. There does not seem to have been a Percheron, a Belgian, or a Clydesdale in Minnesota in 1855. The first premium for bulls went to E. L. Larpenteur for his three-year-old Durham, and J. G. Lennon won in the sheep class with a Leicestershire, the breed made famous in England by the renowned Robert Bakewell. The hog exhibit was mediocre, but there were chickens in abundance, mainly Shanghais, Chittagongs, and Brahmopootras. Yellow Dent corn that yielded eighty-five bushels to the acre was on display, and Stevens exhibited a stalk of corn seventeen feet high. The wheat, rye, and buckwheat shown were produced chiefly in Hennepin County. The vegetable display "astonished even the natives," with Ramsey County leading in cabbages, pumpkins, and squashes, and Hennepin in potatoes, turnips, beets, and onions. One radish that was shown weighed nearly eighteen pounds, and potatoes weighing nearly three pounds and yielding four hundred bushels to an acre were numerous. Among the ladies' exhibits were

<sup>15</sup> *Pioneer*, January 18, March 29, 1855; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 28-31.

house plants, butter, carpets, flowers, rugs, needlework, and fancy articles. A highlight and a harbinger of the future was the showing of three fine apples by the Reverend Gideon H. Pond. Another attraction securing much attention from the two thousand spectators was a contest of horsemanship among ladies. Later, however, the department of ladies' equestrianship was abolished, because great dissatisfaction, and even feuds, developed among the contestants' friends.<sup>16</sup>

In 1856 the society held a fair of its own in Minneapolis, and in 1857 it sponsored another, this time in St. Paul. The latter event coincided with the panic of 1857, which caused great financial loss to the society. Political rivalry also hurt the fair. Many Republicans refused to attend because they believed it was part of a Democratic machine. No fair was held in 1858 because of depressed economic conditions, but in 1859 the society joined with the Hennepin County society again and presented a "Union Fair" at Minneapolis, which was only partially successful.<sup>17</sup>

An act of the legislature approved on February 16, 1860, gave the society, henceforth known as the Minnesota State Agricultural Society, the powers of a corporate body and provided for the organization of county agricultural societies. Thus, although the act was not well drawn up, the state society was placed on a legal and permanent basis. An attempt at this time to get the legislature to appropriate money for the society's work failed.<sup>18</sup>

Having achieved a sounder basis, the society renewed its work with enthusiasm. A fair was held at Fort Snelling from September 26 to 28, 1860, which of all the fairs "from Donnybrook to Nijni-Novgorod" was not surpassed in the

<sup>16</sup> *Pioneer*, October 18, 25, 1855; Loehr, ed., *Minnesota Farmers' Diaries*, 24, 25; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 31-34.

<sup>17</sup> *Pioneer*, October 16, 1856; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 35-47.

<sup>18</sup> *Laws*, 1860, p. 143-145; *Minnesota Farmer and Gardener* (St. Paul), 1:44 (December, 1860); Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 48-53. Files of agricultural periodicals cited herein are owned by the Minnesota Historical Society unless otherwise indicated.

degree of satisfaction it afforded those who attended. Among the notable exhibits was John H. Manny's combined reaper and mower, the only machine of its kind on the ground. There were entries of cattle, horses, sheep, hogs, farm products, horticultural products, farm implements, articles of domestic manufacture, and miscellaneous materials. The largest hog in Minnesota, a 640-pound Chester White barrow, was shown by Wyman Elliot of Minneapolis. An address lasting two hours was given by Cassius Clay of Kentucky. Only perfunctory applause came at the end.<sup>19</sup>

The Civil War changed the plans of the state society, which did not attempt to arrange fairs in 1861 or 1862. In the former year the Anoka and Blue Earth county groups held fairs, but they were not successful. Economic conditions were disturbed, crops were poor, and people were greatly concerned over the war. At times even the weather conspired to defeat the well-laid plans of fair sponsors. In the words of the editor of one Minnesota newspaper: "The first Tuesday . . . of our second annual Fair was drizzly, mizzly, nasty, dirty, disagreeable, and generally otherwise uncomfortable, besides being somewhat moist." Still some people wanted to see agricultural society work continued, and there were unsuccessful efforts during these years to get state aid for such bodies.<sup>20</sup> The leading state farm journal in 1861 commented as follows on the subject:

Minnesota is one of the few states that has done nothing to advance her great interests of agriculture. An effort was made last winter to have the Legislature make a small appropriation in aid of the various agricultural societies, but without avail. Money could be found for almost any other purpose, but when a few hundred dollars were asked to aid our State and county societies there was a general plea of poverty. Not a few seemed to think that appropriating money for such a purpose was entirely new and unheard of in the annals of modern legislation. The body was composed largely of farmers, but . . . most of them took little or no interest in the subject.

<sup>19</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 55-64.

<sup>20</sup> *St. Peter Tribune*, September 26, 1860; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 65-70.

We are now engaged in a war that is making a fearful show for heavy taxes, and it may be deemed altogether inexpedient to even talk of an appropriation for our agricultural societies at such a time. . . .

The cultivation of the soil and raising stock of various kinds will always be the chief occupation of our people. It is highly proper then that these great interests should be encouraged by the government. Even a small appropriation would result in great good. It would help the now feeble societies to attain the object of their organizations. In one year . . . we should hear of many efficient societies and annual fairs worthy of the name.

This has been the result in other States. . . . We hope, therefore, something will be done by the present Legislature, and that a small appropriation will be made, not only for the State Society, but for every county that shall conform to certain conditions, which shall be specified in the act. Without such encouragement our societies will eke out a miserable existence, and make but little, if any, real progress.<sup>21</sup>

In 1861 many county societies were not in working order. The three old counties of Washington, Ramsey, and Benton had no organizations, though some new and remote counties, such as Blue Earth, Freeborn, and Faribault, had groups full of life and activity. The *Minnesota Farmer and Gardener* placed the blame for lifeless societies upon their officers. Finally, in the legislative session of 1861-62, the house passed a bill giving twenty-five dollars to county societies, but the senate killed it. At that time there were only two farmers in the senate, and some of those in the house were described as "old foggyish." Probably about ten societies would have been ready to use the money. This would have meant a total outlay of two hundred and fifty dollars, or about half the cost of a daily legislative session.<sup>22</sup>

Available evidence indicates that the 1860's were difficult years for the county societies. Speaking of the Ramsey County fair of 1863, Mitchell Y. Jackson recorded in his diary on February 7:

Attend what is called a Ramsey County fair which is a meagre collection of Cattle & horses brought in by their owners & offered for

<sup>21</sup> *Farmer and Gardener*, 1:362 (December, 1861).

<sup>22</sup> *Farmer and Gardener*, 1:258, 2:73 (September, 1861, March, 1862).

sale at auction. Offered my bull under a limit of 100.\$ no sale  
Reach home about 10 Oclock cold and tired.<sup>23</sup>

For the Faribault County fair of 1868 even the weather was inclement, and the exhibition could not begin until the day after that announced for the opening. "Two beets and a harness looked askance at each other downstairs," reads the newspaper report of the fair, "while out of doors, two fine wooled bucks occupied the rear of a lumber wagon. All took the premium. . . . The department of Fine Arts upstairs," continues the report, "was ornamented with a variety of useful and ornamental articles, including babies." Even the track was in poor condition; nevertheless the horse races came off.<sup>24</sup>

During the 1860's the state society was in financial straits. In 1863 the state fair was renewed and it was held annually thereafter, though all the fairs were not successes by any means. The fair of 1863, which was characterized by a St. Paul paper as "a ridiculous failure, a burlesque," was located again at Fort Snelling; that of 1864, at Red Wing; that of 1865, at Minneapolis; and those of 1866 and 1867 at Rochester. At the conclusion of the fair of 1866 some interested people formed the Minnesota Fruit Growers' Association and elected, as president, the well-known editor and fruit-fancier, Daniel A. Robertson. None of these fairs was unusual, but an action of the state society at its meeting in 1867 deserves recognition. It adopted a resolution stating "that the continual cropping of wheat, year after year, in the same field, without even a change of seed, is bad farming and ought to be discouraged."<sup>25</sup> Few farmers heeded this admonition, but it illustrates the society's interest in promoting better farming.

The year 1868 was notable in the history of agricultural

<sup>23</sup> Jackson, in Loehr, ed., *Minnesota Farmers' Diaries*, 217.

<sup>24</sup> Kiester, *Faribault County*, 264.

<sup>25</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 73-96; *Pioneer*, October 4, 1863.

societies in the state in at least two ways. First, the legislature finally appropriated money to aid both the state and county societies. The act, approved on February 27, gave a thousand dollars to the state body and set aside two thousand dollars to be apportioned among the county organizations. Two restrictions were placed on the use of the money. It could not be used to pay officers' salaries or premiums on horse racing. A second development of the year was the formation of the State Farmers' Club at Minneapolis on October 2. Its purpose was to aid in the organization of farmers' clubs in various towns and to co-operate with the Minnesota State Agricultural Society and the Minnesota Fruit Growers' Association. Charles Hoag was elected president and Stevens was chosen secretary. During 1867 and 1868 many farmers' clubs were being organized in the state, and it was only logical that this development should culminate in the formation of a state club.<sup>26</sup>

In the early 1870's county agricultural society work was stimulated by the law of 1868. At the meeting of the state society in 1874 the secretary reported that there were forty-three county societies in the state, of which thirty-eight had made reports and drawn fifty dollars each from the standing state appropriation. Even some of the western counties had societies by the early 1870's. For example, the Lac qui Parle County Agricultural Society was organized and held its first exhibit in 1872. "Within ten years," according to a county history, the annual fairs "had come to be recognized as among the leading events of their kind in western Minnesota and were largely attended by persons from all over this part of the state."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Laws*, 1868, p. 33-35; *Farmers' Union* (Minneapolis), January, November, 1868; *Glencoe Register*, March 25, April 29, 1869; *Rochester Post*, November 13, 1869; March 12, 19, 1870; *Farmer and Gardener*, 1:37 (December, 1860); *Minnesota Farmer* (St. Paul), 2:269 (June, 1879); Kiestler, *Faribault County*, 264; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 97.

<sup>27</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 118; Lycurgus R.

The state fairs of 1868, 1869, and 1870 were located at Minneapolis, Rochester, and Winona, respectively, and nothing unusual marked any of them. During the 1870's, however, a bitter rivalry developed between St. Paul and Minneapolis over the location of the state fair site. In earlier years it seemed best to follow an itinerant system of exhibitions; but with the extension of railroad facilities and the need for better accommodations at the fairs, it appeared advisable to obtain permanent fair grounds. Bitter struggles between towns contending for fair sites had occurred in many states, and Minnesota was no exception.<sup>28</sup> It did not obtain a permanent location for its state fair until 1885.

Beginning in 1871 and continuing through 1876 the state fairs were held at St. Paul, where they encountered many obstacles. Just two weeks before the Minnesota State Fair of 1871, Hennepin County held its fair with Horace Greeley as the chief speaker. Then Minneapolis people "knocked" the Minnesota fair, and Colonel William S. King, a well-known Minneapolis livestock breeder, sent his finest cattle to the Illinois State Fair rather than show them in St. Paul. The general economic depression following the panic of 1873 and losses resulting from the grasshopper plagues were other causes for distress on the part of the state agricultural society. Hence, at the annual meeting of 1877, the secretary had the unpleasant task of announcing that the society was over three thousand dollars in debt. At the same gathering the agricultural society consolidated with the Minnesota Stock Breeders' Association, despite the opposition of some who objected to the latter's alleged leaning toward horse racing. From the financial standpoint, however, the breeders' association had much to offer,

Moyer and Ole G. Dale, eds., *History of Chippewa and Lac qui Parle Counties*, 1:592 (Indianapolis, 1916).

<sup>28</sup> *St. Paul Weekly Pioneer*, October 2, 1868; *Rochester Post*, October 2, 1869; February 19, 26, 1870; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 96-104; Ross, in *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 24:462-465.

for it was out of debt. A joint fair under the auspices of the two groups at Minneapolis from September 3 to 8, 1877, was a great success. Beer stands were plentiful, side shows were numerous, and a crowd of twenty thousand was present on the second day. As a result of this exhibition all debts of the agricultural society were paid and surplus funds were divided between the two organizations, which then dissolved partnership. For the first time in the fair's history people rode to the grounds in horse- or mule-drawn streetcars.<sup>29</sup>

In 1878, two fairs again divided honors, the Minnesota State Fair at St. Paul and a fair at Minneapolis sponsored by the Minnesota Agricultural and Mechanical Association. Rutherford B. Hayes and James G. Blaine attended both exhibitions and helped to attract many people. At St. Paul "the 'Britishers', in their red coats and top boots, flying amid clouds of blinding dust" put on a genuine English hurdle race such as they enjoyed at the English colony of Fairmont. Nevertheless most accounts admit that the Minneapolis fair outshone the one at St. Paul; and, in 1879, the same was true, when two fairs again were held in the rival cities.<sup>30</sup>

When delegates to the meeting of the state agricultural society assembled in St. Paul in February, 1880, they were a discouraged group. Unpaid debts totaled four thousand dollars, and the Minneapolis society had announced its intention of holding another great fair of its own. Members of the state society in the southern part of the state, however, came to the rescue, and the state fairs of 1880, 1881, and 1882 were held in Rochester. Trends in agriculture

<sup>29</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 107-133; Ross, in *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, 24:470. The *Stillwater Messenger* of September 20, 1878, urged farmers to turn out and make the county fair a fair and not an "agricultural hoss trot."

<sup>30</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 130, 135-139; Maurice Farrar, *Five Years in Minnesota*, 84 (London, 1880); John R. Cummins' Diary, September 5, 1878. The latter is a manuscript in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.



were well manifested at these fairs. The Minnesota State Wool Growers' Association and the State Dairymen's Association co-operated with the state society in promoting the fair of 1881, and more cattle, hogs, and milch cows began to be displayed. Farmers in the southern part of the state were paying less attention to wheat and were beginning to diversify their farming. The fair of 1883 was held at Owatonna, and whether or not it was a success seems to be a controversial matter.<sup>31</sup>

The legislature of 1883 passed a bill, framed by officers and friends of the state society, providing an annual state appropriation of four thousand dollars for the society and creating a board of auditors to report to the legislature at each session. At its annual meeting of 1884 the society took definite action for obtaining a permanent fair location. Action toward the same end in 1877 and in 1883 had proved premature. Now a committee was appointed in pursuance of a resolution to negotiate with citizens of St. Paul and Minneapolis with a view to buying eighty to a hundred acres of land as a site. No location was selected in 1884, however, so the state fair was again held at Owatonna. A joint committee to consider the matter, made up of the representatives of the Minneapolis Board of Trade and the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, met in November and again in December, but it failed to take action. In the meantime, H. S. Fairchild suggested to the Ramsey County commissioners that it might be well to sell a hundred acres of the Ramsey County Poor Farm for a fair site. After many discussions, conferences, and expressions of rivalry, the state society accepted as a gift from Ramsey County two

<sup>31</sup> Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 141-157; David M. Fyffe, "Reminiscences," 55-58. The latter is a manuscript in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society. The writer, who settled in Pipestone County as the manager of a colonization company in 1882, describes the Owatonna fair. There were sheds about the outside of the grounds for the horses and some beef cattle, and cheap sheds on the ground for sheep, hogs, and cattle. The judging of stock was accompanied by numerous quarrels.

hundred acres of land formerly included in its poor farm. Finally, the legislature by an act approved on March 2, 1885, provided for the acceptance of the gift, though not without much opposition. During the debates on the question, Hennepin County state legislators even proposed that two fair grounds be established. The first state fair on the new site was held from September 7 to 15, 1885. In preparation for this event buildings costing \$150,000 had been constructed in the short space of ninety days. Thus, after many vicissitudes, the great Minnesota State Fair found the home which it still occupies. At the conclusion of the 1885 fair the *St. Paul Dispatch* expressed the opinion that "the results have justified the wisdom of locating the fair grounds midway between the two great cities," but a Minneapolis newspaper still voiced the hope that a northwestern exposition would be held in 1886 to compete with the state fair.<sup>32</sup>

With the advent of the 1870's, new social and economic conditions arose in Minnesota which called for other types of rural organizations in addition to the society and the fair. This was true in other Middle Western states as well. As one writer has pointed out, the period from 1850 to 1870 was the "golden age" of the agricultural fair, but about 1870 other types of farm associations arose to supplement these expositions. This did not injure the fairs, but they became agencies "through which a hundred other associations make a popular appeal." They were forced to readjust themselves, and to define their "relationship to other agricultural organizations."<sup>33</sup> They reflected the work and interests of other rural groups, but they no longer remained the sole agency to which the farmer might look for inspiration, education, and co-operation.

Thus agricultural societies and fairs were no longer the

<sup>32</sup> *Laws*, 1883, p. 198; 1885, p. 214-216; *St. Paul Dispatch*, September 15, 1885; Hall and Holcombe, *State Agricultural Society*, 158-191, 194.

<sup>33</sup> Neely, *Agricultural Fair*, 99-109.

sole outlets for farmers' organizing tendencies. The Patrons of Husbandry had become important in Minnesota by the middle 1870's. In addition, general farmers' clubs and groups of specialists in various branches of agriculture were in existence before 1885. One of these was the Winona County Poultry Association, which opened its first exhibit with over fifty coops of chickens, geese, ducks, turkeys, and fighting cocks on January 1, 1873. The most unusual display consisted of two coops of Drahtmas. Three of these birds sold for fifty dollars, and their eggs were worth five dollars a dozen. In 1874 poultry men organized the Minnesota State Poultry Association and arranged the first of its annual exhibitions.<sup>34</sup> This group did much to induce farmers to devote attention to poultry and eggs.

The Minnesota Stock Breeders' Association was organized in 1877 with King as its first president and R. C. Judson as secretary. This organization was composed of farmers of central Minnesota, while breeders in the southern part of the state belonged to the Southern Minnesota Stock Breeders' Association. One outstanding figure in the Minnesota livestock business, Leonard Johnson of East Castle Rock, in 1878 was elected a vice-president of the National Association of Importers and Breeders of Norman Horses at a meeting in Peoria, Illinois.<sup>35</sup>

In February, 1878, a meeting of some thirty-five dairymen in St. Paul resulted in the formation of the State Dairymen's Association. Articles of incorporation were adopted and officers were chosen. S. S. Gardner of Wadena was elected president, and William Fowler of Newport and C. F. Whittier of Northfield were named vice-presidents.

<sup>34</sup> *Winona Weekly Republican*, January 1, March 19, 1873; *Minnesota Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 8, p. 2 (April, 1878); *Farmers' Union*, June 20, 1874. The Minnesota State Poultry Association filed its articles of incorporation with the secretary of state on March 16, 1885. These and the association's bylaws are owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>35</sup> *Minnesota Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 6, p. 3; no. 7, p. 7; no. 8, p. 9 (February, March, April, 1878).

Several essays on dairying were read, aid was asked from the state for the publication of the association's transactions, and the secretary was instructed to gather data about the state's dairy interests and to report his findings as soon as possible. This meeting reflected a growing interest in dairying and revealed the farmers' desire to learn more about this branch of agriculture. The second meeting of the group was held at St. Paul in February, 1879. Butter and cheese were exhibited, and papers were read on various subjects connected with dairying.<sup>36</sup> Undoubtedly this body was not without some influence in transforming Minnesota from a wheat-growing to a dairying state.

With the exception of the five years from 1860 to 1865, sheep production was neglected in Minnesota during the early period, and in order to advance this interest several prominent owners of sheep met in St. Paul on February 20, 1879, and organized the Minnesota State Wool Growers' Association. A constitution was adopted, and a report was read asking that dogs be subjected to legal restrictions and that all owners pay a dog license annually to build up a fund for the benefit of sheep owners who suffered losses because of dogs. For many years dogs were the bane of sheep owners in the state, and the newspapers were filled with condemnations of dogs by sheep raisers. An act of 1873 made the owner of a dog who killed or wounded sheep liable for the value of such sheep, but it evidently did not satisfy the sheep owners.<sup>37</sup>

Another important agricultural organization was the Minnesota State Butter and Cheese Association. This body grew out of a meeting of over eighty people at Rochester on March 7, 1882. There a temporary chairman and secretary were elected, a committee on permanent or-

<sup>36</sup> *Minnesota Farmer*, vol. 1, no. 7, p. 4; vol. 2, p. 153 (March, 1878; February, 1879).

<sup>37</sup> *Minnesota Farmer*, 2:184, 3:128 (March, 1879; February, 1880); *Laws*, 1873, p. 140.

ganization was chosen, and the association's aim—to gain knowledge of dairying—was defined. The next morning a second session convened, at which permanent officers were elected and a constitution and bylaws were adopted. After the business session, various persons related their experiences in the dairy business. Some of the subjects discussed were the "History and progress of dairying," "Pioneer dairying, the adaptability of our soil for dairy purposes, and our wants as a dairy state," "Are stock and dairy conventions useful and beneficial to the agricultural industries of the state?", "The best and most practical means of operating creameries," "Which pays the farmer better, the full milk or gathered cream system?", and "The best stock for a dairy farm and how it could be obtained." In addition a letter was read from the freight agent of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, dated March 1, 1882, saying that it was interested in promoting the dairy business in Minnesota. Finally, committees were appointed on dairy implements, on butter and cheese, and on resolutions.<sup>38</sup>

In March, 1883, the association met again in Rochester, W. L. Brackenridge of that city making the address of welcome. W. D. Hoard of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, president of the Northwest Dairymen's Association, responded, stating that it was difficult to get farmers to change their ways until they were brought "down to the last depths of despair." Charles E. Marvin, in his presidential address, listed some of the obstacles to a rapid development of dairy and stock interests. These were, he said, lack of co-operation, improper handling or feeding of stock, buying too many cows, and building too many creameries.<sup>39</sup>

The Butter and Cheese Association meetings proved at-

<sup>38</sup> Martin J. Anderson, "The Development of the Dairy Products Industry in Minnesota," in Minnesota Dairy and Food Department, *Bulletins*, no. 52, p. 8 (Minneapolis, 1914); Minnesota State Butter and Cheese Association, *Proceedings*, 1882, p. 3-9, 15-79.

<sup>39</sup> Butter and Cheese Association, *Proceedings*, 1883, p. 6-11.

tractive and helpful to those who attended, and the association did much to build up dairy interests in Minnesota. In its published *Proceedings*, it made available many important items of information that were useful to the farmer of the day. These publications seem to indicate that the organization was more active than the State Dairymen's Association. During its first three years of existence the Butter and Cheese Association paid out over fourteen hundred dollars in premiums. Thus it was able to qualify for state aid under an act of the legislature of 1883. According to this law, a society might receive at least three hundred dollars from the state for premiums if it had paid out that much in premiums itself a year before applying for state aid. Incidentally, in 1883 there were forty agricultural societies in the state that met these conditions.<sup>40</sup>

It is interesting to compare the organizational development of agrarian interests in Minnesota in 1885 with that of the 1850's. In the earlier period, when the region was a frontier, slight evidence can be found of the existence of specialized farming groups. General societies, farmers' clubs, and fairs served the farmers' needs. In the later period, however, this situation no longer existed. Parts of the state had passed out of the stage of specialized wheat farming; and some farmers were concentrating on dairying, others were mainly interested in wool production, and a third group was devoting itself to raising livestock. New economic and social conditions necessitated new types of organization, and these organizations in turn played a part in the transition of agriculture from wheat raising to diversified farming. Specialization in wheat is often associated with a pioneer agriculture, yet by 1885 Minnesota had progressed so far from this stage that it was awarded the "grand sweepstakes" for the best butter and the "grand diploma of honor" for an exhibit at the World Industrial

<sup>40</sup> Butter and Cheese Association, *Proceedings*, 1883, p. 117.

and Centennial Exposition in New Orleans. To no small degree was this dairy development due to the efforts of the dairymen's associations in the state.<sup>41</sup>

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BROOKINGS

<sup>41</sup> Minnesota Butter, Cheese, and Dairy Stock Association, *Proceedings*, 1885, p. 13; Theodore Christianson, *Minnesota: The Land of Sky-tinted Waters*, 2: 133 (New York, 1935).

## HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY POSTS IN THE MINNESOTA COUNTRY

FUR-TRADING POSTS were relatively numerous in the Minnesota country in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, though they belonged, not to the Hudson's Bay Company, as is often believed, but to the Northwest Company, the X Y Company, and the American Fur Company. Only a small number were Hudson's Bay Company posts. That company had but few forts in the region except along the international boundary between Canada and Minnesota and in the Red River Valley. It is mainly with these areas, therefore, that this paper treats.

The Hudson's Bay Company did not enter the Minnesota field until late in the eighteenth century. The Northwest Company pre-empted the region about the time of the American Revolution and the Hudson's Bay Company did not at first meet its rival's challenge in a district so far south of its normal field of operations. Consequently, it was not until competition became very keen that the Hudson's Bay Company reached beyond the boundary line.

The Rainy Lake country and the Pembina region saw the first posts of the company in the Minnesota area. In the autumn of 1793 John McKay established a fort at the outlet of Rainy Lake, then universally called by its French name, *Lac la Pluie*. It was situated on the Canadian side of the Rainy River below the falls and the large and important fort of the Northwest Company. McKay explains the importance of the rival fort in his diary:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> McKay's Diary, September 26, 1793, in Hudson's Bay Company Archives, London, B.105/a/1. Since much of the information on which this article is based was found in the company's archives, the author takes this opportunity of acknowledging the kindness and courtesy of the governor and committee in permitting the use and quotation of this material.



This fort is not merely kept up for the trade it makes. its a randevous for The people of the Rabarcan [*Athabasca*] and slave Lake as thay Canot get to the Grand Portage and return the same year. Besides this is the post where the Canada N. W. Company procures most of their Canoes for The inland Business.

With a single gap of some twenty years, the Hudson's Bay Company had a post on the Rainy River until very modern times. Though it was not actually on Minnesota soil, its trade was with the Indians south as well as north of the border. Moreover, it was the headquarters of several outposts, some of which were established within the American lines. After 1797 the company seems to have been without a post on Rainy River until 1818, when Robert Dickson inspired the erection of one.<sup>2</sup> Some missionaries who went to the Red River in 1818 reported thus of this fort:

The Hudson's Bay Company's post is not yet well organized; everything is in its infancy. It has a beautiful location, but it is not finished; it is under construction. The Company did not begin to build in this place till last spring. The two forts are fifteen or twenty arpents apart.<sup>3</sup>

The diaries and reports from the Rainy River post are numerous and very interesting. The Hudson's Bay Company's report for Lac la Pluie for 1822-23, the second season after its union with the Northwest Company, was written by Dr. John McLoughlin and is a mine of information about the post. There were at the post twenty-four *engagés*, a guide, two interpreters, three clerks, a chief trader, and a chief factor, McLoughlin. These men dealt with Indians both north and south of the line, whom McLoughlin lists in great detail. He names 107 men, 118 women, and

<sup>2</sup> Louis A. Tohill, *Robert Dickson, British Fur Trader on the Upper Mississippi*, 92 (Ann Arbor, 1927); International Joint Commission, *Final Report on the Lake of the Woods Reference*, 129 (Washington and Ottawa, 1917).

<sup>3</sup> Father Joseph N. Provencher to Bishop Joseph O. Plessis, July 6, 1818, in the Archiepiscopal Archives, Quebec. The original letter is in French.



# POSTS OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND ITS COMPETITORS IN THE MINNESOTA COUNTRY

[From Grace Lee Nute, *The Voyageur's Highway*, 40 (St. Paul, 1941).]

230 children, and gives the hunting capacity of every brave mentioned as well as his hunting range, telling whether it is north or south of the line. He records that the chief fur-bearing animals are martens and muskrats. "Beaver . . . has been diminishing for these several years past, especially on the South Side of Rainy Lake — Rainy Lake River and Lake of the Woods."<sup>4</sup>

The journals of the Rainy River post end with the season 1837-38, but it was continued until the trading season of 1897-98, when the settler's frontier reached the Rainy Lake area and it was no longer possible to carry on the fur trade there. The name was changed to Fort Frances in honor of Governor George Simpson's bride. She was with her husband at the fort on September 25, 1830, when "a flacon of Spirits was broken & Spilled on the foot of the [flag] Staff, and the Fort named Fort Frances in honour of M<sup>rs</sup> Simpson's Christian name." Following this ceremony, "all the Whites gave three Hearty Cheers—and the Indians fired above 300 Shots."<sup>5</sup>

About 1830 a colorful character arrived in the Rainy Lake region, an American Fur Company rival of whom the diarists at Fort Frances have much to recount. This was a well-educated Danish physician, Dr. Charles William Wulff Borup, later a pioneer banker in St. Paul, where his descendants are still prominent. Many were the Indians, traders, and missionaries whom his technical skill served in the wilderness, now at Rainy Lake, now at La Pointe on the south shore of Lake Superior, while he continued to trade furs as his main means of securing a livelihood.<sup>6</sup> The diarist at the company's post on Rainy Lake has many humorous and rather disparaging yarns to recount about

<sup>4</sup> McLoughlin's report is in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 105/e/2.

<sup>5</sup> Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 105/a/15.

<sup>6</sup> Warren Upham and Rose B. Dunlap, *Minnesota Biographies*, 65 (*Minnesota Historical Collections*, vol. 14).

this rival during the early days of his sojourn there, but they must be taken with the proverbial grain of salt in the light of Borup's later distinguished career. Trade rivals were notoriously ungenerous in their estimates of one another.

Borup's fort in 1830 was on the south side of the Rainy River, opposite the Hudson's Bay Company's post. There an American Fur Company post had been established in 1823 by William Morrison, whose chief claim to fame rests on his statement that he visited the true source of the Mississippi River, Lake Itasca, some thirty years before Henry R. Schoolcraft made the officially accepted discovery in 1832. As a matter of fact, probably neither man was the true "first" discoverer. As early as 1726 a French geographer wrote: "The source of the Mississippi River has been discovered. It is southwest of the Lake of the Assiniboin at the 48th degree of latitude and the 276th of longitude."<sup>7</sup>

The American post on the Rainy River soon had subsidiary stations at Warroad, Vermilion Lake, Grand Marais, Grand Portage, Basswood Lake, Pembina, and elsewhere on the border. Competition with the Hudson's Bay Company became so keen that in 1833 a gentlemen's agreement was entered into by the rival companies.

One of the Hudson's Bay Company outposts of the Rainy Lake fort was Ash, or possibly Asp, House, a little above the mouth of Rainy River on the Minnesota side. Its site was six hours by canoe from the Lake of the Woods, in the reckoning of the day. It was begun in 1794, when one building was erected. The next year at least two more

<sup>7</sup> See La Motte de Cadillac's "Relation" about the "Sea of the West," in a manuscript volume, number 293, part 3, p. 441, in the Edward E. Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, Chicago. The passage quoted, which like the rest of the volume is in French, seems to be an anonymous editorial comment, probably by Guillaume Delisle. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries longitude was reckoned in a manner different from today. Delisle's own maps of the period of the "Relation" show the 276th degree not far west of Lake Itasca.

houses were built. In his diary, McKay describes the details of building, providing one of the most adequate records available of the steps followed in the construction of a fur-trading post. How long this fort continued is uncertain. Alexander Henry, the younger, mentions it in 1800 as "another old H. B. Co. establishment." In the spring of 1825 a company man was stationed there.<sup>8</sup>

Another outpost was located on Vermilion Lake. Most persons have assumed that this was the large body of water in northeastern Minnesota that still goes by that name. Yet old maps show another Vermilion Lake, now called Little Vermilion Lake, on the boundary between Namakan and Loon lakes. In 1823 there was a post on this smaller Vermilion Lake, and the chances are strong that it was there that the Hudson's Bay Company established its fort to meet the competition of the Northwest Company and the American Fur Company. As early as 1822 Dr. McLoughlin wrote of the Vermilion Lake post in the past tense: "Formerly there was a winter Post at Vermilion Lake." It must have been on American soil, for he adds that this is American territory and hence the company's opposition post was located on Basswood Lake "on our side." The latter post, he adds, was established in 1822. Its location is given on a manuscript map in the papers of David Thompson. Simon McGillivray, Jr., was the Basswood Lake trader in 1822-23; C. W. Bouck, in 1824-25.<sup>9</sup>

The diary that Donald McPherson kept at Rainy Lake for the season 1817-18 mentions on several occasions the

<sup>8</sup> Elliott Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, 1:21, 22 (New York, 1897); Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 105/a/2, B. 105/a/3, B. 105/e/6.

<sup>9</sup> John J. Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe*, 2:259, and map, p. 346 (London, 1850); Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 105/e/2, B. 105/e/6; map of "Lac des Bois Blanc[s]," July 9, 1823, in David Thompson's Diary, Department of Public Records and Archives of the Province of Ontario, Toronto. The Basswood Lake post was still occupied in 1841-42, according to E. H. Oliver, *The Canadian Northwest*, 822, 842, 858 (Ottawa, 1914).

post of Charles Giasson on the Lake of the Woods. As McPherson indicates that the route to Pembina passed Giasson's post, it is probable that this was the fort mentioned by Dr. McLoughlin in 1822-23, when he wrote: "In Lake of the Woods we used to keep one Post, one year on the South Side and the next on the North, but as the South side belongs to the Americans, we cannot go to our former place, War road. We must get as high the Americans as we can." During the same season the American trader Pierre Coté accused the Hudson's Bay Company men of trading on the south side of the line, particularly at Roseau Lake. The post report of 1824-25 states that David Thompson, who was then one of the commissioners surveying the international boundary line, told Dr. McLoughlin that "we had a right to build and form an establishment near the post of War Road . . . within a mile and a half of the Old House, formerly occupied by the late N W Company." On May 6, 1819, there is a reference to a Mr. Godin as clerk at Warroad, and the next season Bouck was there. The Rainy Lake journal of that season mentions much passing back and forth to Red River via the Warroad post. Dr. John J. Bigsby seems to mention the other Hudson's Bay Company post on Lake of the Woods when he writes that "We slept near Buffalo Head. . . . Within a few yards of our encamping-ground was a wintering-house of the Hudson's Bay Company." This was in the summer of 1823. The exact site is shown on Bigsby's map of the Lake of the Woods.<sup>10</sup>

The region between the Lake of the Woods and Turtle Mountain was tributary to another chief post, Pembina. Like Rainy Lake it had its outposts and substations—Lake Roseau, Red Lake, Grand Forks, Turtle River, Lake Traverse, and others. The first Hudson's Bay Company fort at

<sup>10</sup> Entries of January 12, 15, 1820, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 105/a/7. See also B. 105/a/5, B. 105/a/6, and B. 105/e/4; and Bigsby, *Shoe and Canoe*, 2: 296, and map, p. 346.

or near Pembina seems to have been Thomas Miller's, established about 1800 on the east side of Red River. In 1812 the company built Fort Daer at Pembina. In the 1820's and 1830's there was an American fort at Pembina. "Inventory of Goods sent to the Big Fork of Red River—Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> 1829," reads an entry in a ledger kept at Lake Traverse from 1829 to 1831. The trader appears to have been David Aitken, who is known to have been at Pembina the following year.<sup>11</sup> How long this post continued is uncertain, but probably not after 1833. From that year till 1847 an agreement existed between the Hudson's Bay Company and the American Fur Company, whereby American competition along the Minnesota boundary line was almost completely wiped out. This agreement was made in the spring of 1833 and renewed periodically—in 1838, 1840, 1842, 1844, and 1846. On September 26, 1847, Simpson wrote as follows to Ramsay Crooks of the American Fur Company:

By that agreement the American Fur Company were bound to afford certain protection to the frontier trade of the Hudson's Bay Company, but with every disposition on the part of the Am. Fur Company to fulfil their part of the agreement, that owing from a variety of circumstance is now found impracticable, the allowance [*£300 per annum*] usually made is therefore understood to be discontinued from and after the past season as was arranged between us verbally when I had the pleasure of seeing you at New York about 10 days ago.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Grace Lee Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-trading Area, 1660-1855," *ante*, 11:366, 367. A reference to the Pembina post appears in a permit to sell whisky there and at other posts issued to William A. Aitken by Schoolcraft on August 2, 1824. This permit and the ledger mentioned in the text are in the Sibley Papers, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

<sup>12</sup> This letter is among the American Fur Company Papers, in the possession of the New York Historical Society, New York City. The Minnesota Historical Society has a calendar of this large collection. Among the many letters from Sir George Simpson included among these papers is one written on May 14, 1844, in which he states: "We have been put to some expence and inconvenience, in the formation of an outpost from Fort William, at Lac d'original, for the protection of our trade from a small post established at that frontier by the Cleveland Company."

About 1845 the settler's frontier reached Minnesota, hitherto a fur-trader's, soldier's, and missionary's frontier. This fact and the financial failure of the American Fur Company in 1842 explain its inability to keep its pledge after some fifteen years of scrupulous fidelity to it. Hercules L. Dousman of Prairie du Chien, Norman W. Kittson, Henry H. Sibley, and Henry M. Rice appear to have been responsible in large part for the recommencement of competition between the American and the British traders about 1843, following a coalition of Dousman and Sibley with Pierre Chouteau, Jr., and Company at St. Louis in 1842. Joseph Rolette was at Pembina even earlier than 1843, but Kittson's arrival there in that year seems to have marked the beginning of active competition. When it became apparent that this was no sporadic outburst of activity, but a condition that might be expected to continue over a long period of time, the Hudson's Bay Company resolved on a strong fur-policing policy along the Canadian-American boundary by means of a "cordon of posts along the whole frontier from Fort William to Fort Ellice on the Assiniboine" with "large outfits of goods, & a strong complement of officers & men."<sup>13</sup>

The man chosen to oppose the Americans, Henry Fisher, was himself an American. He was a brother of Dousman's wife, Jane Fisher, whose first husband had been Joseph Rolette, Sr. On February 11, 1846, Fisher recorded in his diary that he left the Red River settlement "with twelve men, to go to Penbina in the entention of establishing a Trading Post, with a Liscence from La Pointe to trade on the wis-

The latter firm was an American competitor of the American Fur Company, and its post was on Moose Lake not far from Fort William. A rather full discussion of the rivalry between the Hudson's Bay and American Fur companies in the 1820's is given in the International Joint Commission's *Final Report on the Lake of the Woods Reference*, 119-132.

<sup>13</sup>Simpson to the company, June 24, 1848, in Simpson's Outward Letterbook, 1847-48, p. 681, Hudson's Bay Company Archives. After 1846 Dousman was succeeded in the Pembina trade by his cousin, B. W. Brisbois, and by Henry M. Rice.



consin teritorie." He goes on with a description of how he built his "small House" of logs as well as a store "at the Fork of Penbina." The building of these structures required only four days. The fort was appropriately named Fort Defiance. Fisher found Kittson dull. "He is very quite and never speaks." "President Kittson" was his nickname.<sup>14</sup>

On March 19 Fisher left Joseph Brazeau in charge of the fort, and he himself prepared to go to Fort Ellice. In a letter of that date addressed to Brazeau from Pembina, Fisher writes:

Having committed to your Charge my Establishment at Penbina, I hereby authorise you to conduct my business there during my absence,—observing in your intercourse with the Indians all the conditions annexed to the American Licence which Empowers me to trade with them at Penbina in the Territory of Wisconsin. Of the Licence I will hand you a certified copy; and the conditions referred to are Shortly these: that you do not trade the Indians traps or medals or Guns nor supply them with spirituous Liquors.

Fisher's correspondence reveals that this letter was prepared for him by the Hudson's Bay Company factor at Fort Garry.

When Kittson charged that Fisher's license would not be good unless the latter got his trade goods from the United States, he accused Kittson of "not geting all his supplies from the United States that almost every week he was getting some supplies from Red River Settlement even he got Rum and gave it to Indians." Kittson denied the charges, but later entries in Fisher's diary seem to substantiate some of them. In letters written after Fisher's departure, Brazeau speaks of the Hudson's Bay Company post on the Lake of the Woods and its wealth of furs; lists the furs received from Roseau Lake and the goods sent there; and tells of Kittson's threat to "take a marten for each wolf that they

<sup>14</sup> Fisher's Diary is among the Fisher Papers in the Archiepiscopal Archives at St. Boniface, Manitoba. The Minnesota Historical Society has a photographic copy.

[the Hudson's Bay Company] get off of the American lands," and of his warning to look out for "squawls next year."<sup>15</sup>

The Hudson's Bay Company post at Pembina in 1849 was situated "about *two hundred* yards from the line on their territory"; it then consisted merely of a "small 'shanty,'" but there were "under erection very extensive buildings." In that year a United States military expedition under Major Samuel Woods arrived and examined the place with a view to establishing a military post there or elsewhere in the valley in order to control the trading situation and the buffalo hunts of British half-breeds on American territory.<sup>16</sup> Fort Abercrombie, farther up the valley, was erected a little later; and many years later Fort George H. Thomas, afterward Fort Pembina, was established at Pembina.<sup>17</sup>

Many of the inhabitants of the Red River settlement found the Hudson's Bay Company's prices and regulations unattractive and smuggled their furs to Kittson or his men. A rather humorous narrative of such a smuggling party has been preserved in Peter Garrioch's papers.<sup>18</sup> The period

<sup>15</sup> The letters quoted are in the Fisher Papers.

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Woods, *Pembina Settlement*, 19 (31 Congress, 1 session, *House Executive Documents*, no. 51—serial 577). In addition to Woods's report of November 10, 1849, this document includes a letter of November 30, 1848, from Rice to J. E. Fletcher; a letter of Father Georges A. Belcourt, dated at Pembina, August 20, 1849; and other items that throw much light on British-American competition along the entire northern boundary of Minnesota. Belcourt refers to four American "posts of Red lake, of Reed lake, of Pembina, and at the source of Pembina river or Turtle Mountain"; Fletcher, in a letter of February 12, 1849, mentions "four trading posts on or near our northern boundary line"; and Rice's posts on Vermilion and Rainy lakes are noted. See p. 4, 37.

<sup>17</sup> "Fort Pembina" file, 1870-1903, in Abandoned Military Reservations Papers, General Land Office, Washington. The fort was established on July 8, 1870, by General Orders no. 1; its name was changed on September 6, 1870, by order no. 55; and it was ordered sold on December 11, 1897, according to a letter from Thomas Ryan to the Commissioner of the General Land Office, September 13, 1897.

<sup>18</sup> Peter Garrioch, "Seven Days' Experience of the Pleasures of Smuggling"; Garrioch's Diary, May 8, 9, 1846. Typewritten copies of these items are owned by Mr. Harold Knox of Winnipeg, who placed them at the disposal of the writer.

seems to have been May, 1846. Andrew McDermott and James Sinclair were the leaders of the smuggling element, which became very threatening in the end. Not only did the settlers want an opportunity to sell their furs immediately across the line, but more important, they wanted to continue the cart traffic that had grown to large proportions by 1849, when Woods's expedition met ninety-eight wooden carts en route to St. Paul. A test case of smuggling had occurred the previous spring. Guillaume Sayer and three other half-breeds were arraigned at that time before the court of Assiniboia charged with illegal traffic in furs. So electric was the atmosphere and so threatening were the settlers under the leadership of Louis Riel, the father of another rebel of the same name, that the judge felt it expedient to slip away unnoticed. Though the jury found Sayer guilty, he escaped punishment, and the half-breeds considered that they had won their objective, free trade. "Henceforth the company's fur monopoly in the Red River settlement was a thing of the past, and the creaking Red River carts continued to make their way over the level plains and down the valley of the Mississippi to St. Paul."<sup>19</sup>

Other Hudson's Bay Company posts in the Red River Valley were numerous. In October and early November, 1812, John McLeod, with "Bastonnais" Pangman as his interpreter, built a post at Turtle River as an outpost of Pembina. It is located by Captain John Pope of the Woods expedition, who noted it as he passed.<sup>20</sup> In 1818 and 1819 Louis Bellair, or Bellain, was the company's trader at Red Lake, with a post probably on the west shore.

<sup>19</sup> An excellent account of the controversy between the Red River settlers and the Hudson's Bay Company is given in John P. Pritchett, "Some Red River Fur-trade Activities," *ante*, 5:415-423. See also Woods, *Pembina Settlement*, 9-36 (serial 577).

<sup>20</sup> McLeod's Journal, which is in the Public Archives of Canada at Ottawa, M 201, was called to the writer's attention by Mr. William Douglas of Winnipeg. The Turtle River post is located in Pope's Field Notes, 1:11. A copy of these notes is in the Alfred J. Hill Papers, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

He was drowned, and by February 17, 1820, Peter Powell was the trader there. Duncan Graham of the Hudson's Bay Company had a post near the Wild Rice River prior to 1819, for on November 4 of that year John Bourke proceeded "along Riviere a Folle" and on November 5 he "pass'd the river and encamped opposite Mr Graham's old wintering place." In 1849 Captain Pope noted the remains of an "English fort twenty years old" on the Red River above Pembina and just below and opposite the mouth of Black River; hence the fort was on the Minnesota side of the river. The same officer noted the remains of "an old English fort" just north of the mouth of the Red Lake River.<sup>21</sup>

During the winter of 1819-20 Graham, Bourke, and Joseph Renville maintained a post for the Hudson's Bay Company on or near Lake Traverse, and the following season Bourke and Renville were there.<sup>22</sup> Dickson had maintained a post in the vicinity since about 1800, and as he seems to have been Bourke's superior in the period from 1819 to 1821, it may be conjectured that Bourke's post was near Dickson's. That, from all reports, was on lot 4 in section 2 of township 125 N., range 49 W. There is some evidence, however, that Bourke's post was on the height of land between Lake Traverse and Big Stone Lake.<sup>23</sup>

By 1820 the arrangements between the company on one side and Renville and Graham on the other for a joint trade near Lake Traverse had become unsatisfactory. In that

<sup>21</sup> Pritchett, *ante*, 5: 408; Bourke's "Journal of the Transactions in the Sioux district," 1819-20, in Hudson's Bay Company Archives; Pope's Field Notes, 1: 3, 2: 51, 16: 23, 24, in Hill Papers.

<sup>22</sup> Bourke's "Journal," 1819-20, in Hudson's Bay Company Archives. For a sketch of Renville, see Gertrude W. Ackermann, "Joseph Renville of Lac qui Parle," *ante*, 12: 231-246.

<sup>23</sup> See Tohill, *Robert Dickson*, for a biography of the trader. His post is located by Nute, *ante*, 11: 379, and by James Colhoun in his diary of 1823, p. 117 and map, p. 113. Colhoun states that "Rainville established this trading post six years ago." The Minnesota Historical Society has a copy of this diary.

year Bourke was given charge of the Sioux district, with Renville acting merely as a trader. Graham seems to have entered the service of the Northwest Company in 1820 and to have established a rival post on or near Lake Traverse. In 1821, the year of the union of the Hudson's Bay and Northwest companies, Renville was put in charge at Lake Traverse with Joseph Jeffries as an accountant. Both men left the Hudson's Bay Company in 1822, Renville to become the leader in a new Columbia Fur Company. The Hudson's Bay Company, realizing that the trade of the Sioux district was carried on at a loss and that Selkirk and Dickson's plans for the Red River Valley were impossible to carry through, withdrew the post in 1823.<sup>24</sup>

The underlying reason for the extension of the company's trading ventures so far into American territory as Lake Traverse is closely identified with the story of Dickson's career. After thirty years or so of independent trading in the Sioux countries of the Minnesota-Iowa-Dakota area, he entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company after the War of 1812, a conflict in which he led his Indians and voyageurs with distinction on the British side. By 1816 he was closely associated with Lord Selkirk. The reason is not far to seek. Dickson had been active during the war and was thereafter regarded with suspicion by the United States government. Hence, it was difficult for him to serve as an American trader. Selkirk had a grant of land from the Hudson's Bay Company extending up the Red River to the height of land between Lake Traverse and Big Stone Lake. There was hope that this point of land jutting deep into American territory would remain British, though the surrounding country was American. Selkirk, representing the Hudson's Bay Company, was engaged in bitter strife with the Northwest Company and was endeavoring, through his colony on the lower reaches of the Red River,

<sup>24</sup> Reports, box 524/517, p. 31-33; Letterbook no. 620, p. 40; Simpson's Reports, box 1, no. 588, p. 46-49, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

to thwart the aims of the Nor'Westers to capture the Athabasca and Pacific slope trade. His purpose was twofold: first, he must supply company men going to the contested areas with food, and cheap food must thus be produced in the interior instead of being imported at ruinous cost for freight; second, the Northwest Company would find a bar to its trade when a colony was planted directly athwart its line of communication from the Red River to the Missouri and the Saskatchewan, the area where pemmican was produced.<sup>25</sup> Selkirk saw in Dickson the man he needed—a Britisher in sympathy with the Hudson's Bay Company, acquainted with the area and its inhabitants, allied by marriage to the Sioux, possessed of half-breed children already prominent in the region, and an honest and capable businessman.

So, as the war closed, the plan was hatched for making the upper Red River Valley an agricultural colony under the direction of Dickson, who was to make it also the center of the fur trade for a large area. To that end he was to import all the Indians he could induce to move there and to employ many well-established fur traders. So Dickson spent the winter of 1816-17 at his home on the eastern shore of Lake Traverse maturing his plans.<sup>26</sup> Goods were to be purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company and furs were to be sold to it. Buffalo skins were to be secured and the wool from them woven into cloth in a factory established in the valley. An experimental farm, supported largely by Selkirk, would take the lead in the agricultural colony.

Proof that Dickson was in a measure successful is to be found in the diary kept by Bourke at Lake Traverse in 1820-21. It discloses that sixty or so of Little Crow's band of Indians, also known as the "Gens du Lac," formerly

<sup>25</sup> For an authoritative sketch of Selkirk's role in the feud between the Northwest and Hudson's Bay companies, see Chester A. Martin's introduction to George Simpson, *Journal of Occurrences in the Athabasca Department, 1820 and 1821* (London, 1938).

<sup>26</sup> Tohill, *Robert Dickson*, 88.

inhabitants of the Mendota region at the junction of the Minnesota and Mississippi, removed to the vicinity of Bourke's post in 1817. He says of these Indians: "They are always ready for any thing but hunting and this they have no thought of particularly as they have an Idea that Col Dickson Graham and Renville as their relations can support them."<sup>27</sup>

Bourke also shows that he and such other experienced traders as Powell, Graham, Renville, William Laidlaw, François and Narcisse Frénier, and others were imported from posts as distant as Sault Ste. Marie to engage in the fur trade. Thus Bourke's record disproves in a measure Dr. Louis A. Tohill's conclusion:

On his way to Michilimackinac from Lake Traverse in the spring of 1817 Dickson spent some time in the vicinity of Prairie du Chien trying to persuade the Sioux, Sauk, Menominee, and the Chippewa to follow him to the Red River and settle there. Just how successful he was it is not possible to say, although it seems that comparatively few Indians were willing to leave their ancestral fires to go into a new and untried country. Nor does it seem that he was more successful in convincing his former associates of the advantages of the change. He did make arrangements with Lawe at Green Bay to take goods to the Minnesota and then pass on to trade at some small unnamed streams where furs abounded, according to Dickson's information. On his way to his appointed station, which was probably on the headwaters of the Mississippi, Lawe was to supply Faribault and Renville with goods.<sup>28</sup>

Cattle for the experimental farm were purchased in the United States and driven up to Lake Traverse. In his diary for March 14 and April 12, 1821, Bourke notes that Laidlaw was on his way toward Prairie du Chien "to meet the cattle expected from thence." He was apprehensive that Colonel Josiah Snelling would not let him pass the new fort at the mouth of the Minnesota, and his fears were realized.

In 1817 Selkirk met the Indians of the lower Red River

<sup>27</sup> Bourke's "Journal," November 2, 1820, in Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

<sup>28</sup> Tohill, *Robert Dickson*, 89, 93, 94.

Valley and obtained a lease of their lands from the mouth of the Red River southward to the Grand Forks and westward as far as the junction of the Muskrat and Assiniboine rivers. At Grand Forks was to be Dickson's settlement of Indians and fur traders. The arrangement with the Indians brought loud protests from the Americans. The Indian agent at Prairie du Chien wrote thus on February 16, 1818:

What do you suppose, sir, has been the result of the passage through my agency, of this British nobleman? (Lord Selkirk.) Two entire bands, and part of a third, all Sioux, have deserted us and joined Dickson, who has distributed to them large quantities of Indian presents, together with flags, medals, etc. Knowing this, what must have been my feelings on hearing that his lordship had met with a favorable reception at St. Louis. The newspapers announcing *his arrival and general Scottish* appearance, all tend to discompose me; believing as I do, that he is plotting with his friend Dickson, our destruction—sharpening the savage scalping knife, and colonizing a tract of country, so remote as that of the Red river, for the purpose, no doubt, of monopolizing the fur and peltry trade of this river, the Missouri and their waters—a trade of the first importance to our western states and territories. A courier, who had arrived a few days since, confirms the belief that Dickson is endeavoring to undo what I have done, and secure to the British government the affections of the Sioux, and subject the Northwest Company to his lordship. . . . Dickson, as I have before observed, is situated near the head of the St. Peter's, to which place he transports his goods from Selkirk's Red river establishment, in carts made for the purpose. The trip is performed in five days, sometimes less. He is directed to build a fort on the highest land between Lac du Travers, and Red river, which he supposes will be the established line between the two countries. This fort will be defended by twenty men, with two small pieces of artillery.<sup>29</sup>

It may be that Dickson later altered his plan and made Pembina instead of Grand Forks the place for settlement. At any rate, Catholic missionaries were secured after nearly a century of neglect of this area on the part of the church, and the mission of St. François Xavier was established in

<sup>29</sup> Edward D. Neill, "Indian Trade, A Sketch of the Early Trade and Traders of Minnesota," in Minnesota Historical Society, *Annals*, 1852, p. 44.



1818 at Pembina. There in the next four years, about Fort Daer, grew up a settlement of voyageurs, half-breeds, French-Canadian families imported by Lord Selkirk from Lower Canada, Swiss Protestant families attracted by the earl's propaganda in their native land, and others. A church and a school were established. A resident missionary kept anxious care of the morals of the community. Even a bishop was appointed for the Red River country and its neighborhood, the first evidence under the British regime that a Catholic hierarchy was to be allowed to develop in Canada. Dickson's and Powell's daughters attended the Catholic school at Pembina and entered the Catholic church. On May 21, 1819, Selkirk wrote Dickson that he was planning to purchase lands of the Sioux on Red River within the American boundary and needed his help.<sup>30</sup>

But Dickson and Selkirk had not reckoned with events and personalities that brought their cherished plans to naught. Congress passed an act in 1816 excluding foreigners from the fur trade. In 1818 a convention was agreed upon between the United States and England that set the long-disputed boundary line in the Red River Valley and westward to the Rocky Mountains at the forty-ninth parallel and made a large part of Lord Selkirk's land grant null and void. A military fort was established in 1819 at the junction of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers and an Indian agent was appointed for the area. The commander of the fort and the Indian agent, Lawrence Taliaferro, were more than conscientious in the performance of their duty of guarding the frontier against the Indians and British influence. The Earl of Selkirk died in 1820. Grasshoppers destroyed the crops in the Red River Valley in 1818 and 1821. The Northwest and the Hudson's Bay companies united in 1821. All these events conspired against the success of the Hudson's Bay Company's posts in the

<sup>30</sup> Tohill, *Robert Dickson*, 94; *Bulger Papers*, 1817-1822, vol. 2, p. 12-14, in Public Archives of Canada.

Red River Valley, of the settlements at Grand Forks and Pembina, and of "Hayfield," the experimental farm, which was abandoned in 1822. Dickson himself died in 1823, just as an expedition of the United States army under Major Stephen A. Long started down the Red River Valley. Its purpose was, in part, to learn how many of the Hudson's Bay Company's men were still in the valley and what they were doing there; and to determine exactly where the forty-ninth parallel crossed the valley. The company withdrew its posts from American soil at Pembina and at Lake Traverse and concentrated its attention on the new posts to the east that have already been mentioned.

On the route to Pembina from the Lake of the Woods lay Roseau Lake, frequently called Reed Lake. Augustin Nolin, the Hudson's Bay company trader at Pembina, had a post there in 1830 under the direction of a man probably named Alexander Groundmaster.<sup>21</sup> A relatively late establishment of the company was made there about 1846 as an outpost of Pembina. On February 17, 1846, Fisher recorded in his diary: "got four of my men Prepared to start tomorrow for Lac des Ros[o]." The entry for February 27 reads: "My men arrived from Lac des Roso every thing is quite and tranquill anough there." On March 4 Fisher himself went to Roseau Lake. John Coming, or Cummings, was evidently in charge there and he had three men with him. A man named La Rocque seems to have been his opponent. On March 5 Fisher writes that his men from Roseau Lake report "that Larocque has given liquor to the Indians on that account has got the Indians skins for before he tried to get their furs he was refussed but as soon as he gave the Liquor he got the whole of what they had."

In 1848 Thomas McDermott was named postmaster at the Hudson's Bay Company fort at Roseau Lake, but he

<sup>21</sup> Entry of February 1, 1831, in Hudson's Bay Company Archives, B. 105/a/15. The Roseau Lake post is located on a map in *Parliamentary Papers Relative to the Exploration of the Country between Lake Superior and the Red River Settlement*, 100 (London, 1859).

died on November 28. His successor for that year is not known. Kittson does not mention him in the detailed letters that he wrote to Sibley in 1848 and 1849, though he does speak of the richness of "Lac des Roseau and Lake of the Woods" for lynx pelts. Kittson has this to say of the situation at the three chief posts of the area, Pembina, Roseau Lake, and Turtle Mountain:

The H. B. C<sup>o</sup> gentry are drawing in their horns a little. When the gentlemen in Charge at present first came up he was to play the very D—I with me, but he has found out his mistake and has been candid enough to own to me that it is not such an easy job as he at first expected, and I shall try and make it a little more and more difficult. he is however a very fine man so far and I have no doubt of getting along with him without quarreling.<sup>32</sup>

In 1850, however, competition had so far relaxed that the Hudson's Bay Company removed its Roseau Lake post to Shoal Lake, an arm of the Lake of the Woods.<sup>33</sup>

With the victory of the free traders of Red River over the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849, it was obvious that the day of the company's posts in the Minnesota country was past, particularly as that year witnessed also the formation of Minnesota Territory, which extended beyond the Red River to the Missouri. Indeed, the day of all great fur-trading companies was past in Minnesota. Though trapping continued to be a prosperous business in many parts of the territory and the state for a number of years, and even to this day in a few places, the year 1850 may be regarded as the beginning of a new economic era in the Minnesota country.

GRACE LEE NUTE

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ST. PAUL

<sup>32</sup> Minutes of Council, Northern Department, Norway House, June, 1848, p. 214, Hudson's Bay Company Archives; Kittson to Sibley, November 11, 1848, Sibley Papers.

<sup>33</sup> William Sinclair to Simpson, February 1, 1850, in Simpson Inward Correspondence, Correspondence and Minutes of Council, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

## THE STATE HISTORICAL CONVENTION OF 1941

THE NINETIETH anniversary of the signing of the treaty of Traverse des Sioux, by the terms of which much of southwestern Minnesota was acquired from the Indians, was fittingly marked by the Minnesota Historical Society on July 26, when a group of its members and friends toured to St. Peter and Traverse des Sioux for the nineteenth state historical convention under its auspices. Three sessions at these places were held jointly with the Nicollet County Historical Society. A fourth was held en route to St. Peter near Northfield in the Nerstrand Woods, one of the few surviving remnants of the great hardwood forest known as the Big Woods, which was part of the vast area ceded by the red men in 1851. About a hundred people, who had traveled from the Twin Cities in a chartered bus and in private cars, assembled at 10:00 A.M. for the latter session, which opened the convention. On the way to the woods, they passed through Rosemount, Farmington, Castle Rock, and Northfield, points described in a multigraphed leaflet giving "Glimpses of the History of the Route." This little guide was distributed among the tourists before their departure from St. Paul and at various stopping places along the route.

In the welcome shade of hard maple, elm, basswood, red oak, butternut, and other trees characteristic of the Big Woods, the tourists paused in midmorning for a brief program. It was presented in a grassy opening among the trees, well-hidden from a dusty country road several hundred feet away. The surroundings, said the first speaker, Dr. Walter J. Breckenridge, curator of the Minnesota Museum of Natural History, had probably changed little in the past three hundred years. He discussed the "Natural History Values

in the Nerstrand Woods," where are to be found not only trees, but shrubs, flowers, birds, mammals, and other forms of animal life that no longer exist elsewhere in the Minnesota country, and some that "are strangers to many of us from farther north, since this represents their northern limit." In these woods the ornithologist may encounter such southern birds as the cerulean warbler and the Louisiana water thrush, and the herpetologist will find the "variable but often beautiful coppery brown wood frog." In this "pitifully small remnant of the once extensive hardwoods that covered a large part of southeastern Minnesota only a few decades ago," said Dr. Breckenridge, naturalists have an "outdoor laboratory" for their studies. For that reason they are anxious to have the permanent preservation of the woods ensured.

How the Nerstrand Woods have persisted to the present as a unified wooded area was explained by the presiding officer, Mr. Carl Weicht of Northfield, president of the Rice County Historical Society. The early German and Norwegian settlers took over a tract consisting of about five thousand acres and separated somewhat from the main forested region. It was divided into timber lots and sold to a large number of settlers. Descendants of many of the original owners are among the hundred and seventy people who still own lots in the area. But many have sold their holdings and the timber has been cut, thus reducing the area to something under fifteen hundred acres. If this remnant could be permanently preserved, Mr. Weicht pointed out, it would be easily accessible to sixty per cent of the people now living in Minnesota.

The Big Woods as a whole played an important role in the early history of southern Minnesota, and their significance to the pioneers was brought out by the second speaker, Mr. Willoughby M. Babcock, curator of the museum of the state historical society. He took as his subject "A Trip

through the Big Woods in the 1850's," drawing upon the narratives of travelers of the period for contemporary pictures of conditions in the area. The writers were correspondents of early Minnesota newspapers, and their accounts were discovered in files of these papers in the society's possession. The first, who wrote from Faribault, went into the Big Woods country in December, 1855, with a party that included John, Judson, and Asa Hutchinson, three members of a famous singing troupe. The anonymous writer pictured the settlements in the southern part of the Big Woods, giving special attention to the Root River Valley, where he saw "some of the finest natural scenery to be found in the Territory." Another correspondent was Dr. C. L. Anderson of St. Anthony, a local scientist, who listed many of the varieties of trees he saw in the Big Woods and discussed the geology of the region. He predicted that "at some future day our richest farms will be in these woods," but remarked that the "greatest objection at present is the superabundance of timber." A third writer told of a trip through the woods to the Crow River in midwinter. After Mr. Babcock concluded his reading of extracts from these accounts, Mr. Weicht thanked Mr. Clarence Nohman, owner of the tract of land on which the meeting had been held, for making available this charming and appropriate assembly ground.

Through Cannon City, Faribault, Morristown, and Le Center, the motor caravan proceeded from Nerstrand Woods to St. Peter, where about a hundred and seventy-five people gathered for a luncheon at the Hotel Nicollet. Dr. Arthur J. Larsen, superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society, who presided, called first upon Mr. Cyril W. Plattes, executive secretary to the commissioner of conservation. This speaker continued the discussion of the Big Woods theme, defining the area, describing its characteristics, and outlining the history of Minnesota's long struggle to save Nerstrand Woods. He announced that "an organized

effort is under way, at last, to acquire Nerstrand Woods as an inviolate State-owned natural history sanctuary and recreational area." What seems to be a workable plan has now been drawn up, said Mr. Plattes; it provides that the federal government will "purchase Nerstrand Woods, then exchange it for state land in Chippewa and Superior National Forests." In developing his subject, the speaker pointed out that the very fertility of the soil in the Big Woods area "proved its undoing," for most of the land in this section of Minnesota was cleared—the "great trees crashed, and in their places appeared grain fields, and livestock pastures, and farmsteads, villages, cities." This agricultural transformation was accompanied by another development, said Dr. Larsen in introducing the second speaker on the luncheon program, Dr. Merrill Jarchow of the South Dakota State College at Brookings. In order to display the fruits of their labors, Minnesota settlers arranged county and state fairs at a very early date, and these expositions were discussed by Dr. Jarchow. Since his paper appears in full elsewhere in this issue of *Minnesota History*, it is unnecessary to review his remarks here. Before the noon meeting adjourned, Mr. C. B. Thomas, president of the Pipestone Civic and Commerce Association, extended to the society an invitation to visit his community in connection with the state historical convention of 1942. In responding, Dr. Larsen assured Mr. Thomas that a future meeting would have for its objective the historic Pipestone Quarry, about which a national park now centers.

For the afternoon session, which was held a mile from St. Peter on the prairie overlooking the Minnesota River where the treaty negotiations of July, 1851, were conducted, more than five hundred people assembled at 3:00 P. M. The program was opened by Mr. Henry N. Benson, president of the Nicollet County Historical Society, who introduced the presiding officer, Mr. Ira C. Oehler of St. Paul, president of

the state historical society. He called first upon the Honorable Julius A. Schmahl, state treasurer, for a few remarks about life at old Traverse des Sioux. There, the speaker informed the audience, he was born seventy-four years ago, and there he experienced both the hardships and the excitement of frontier life.

Mr. Oehler next introduced the main speaker of the afternoon, the Honorable Harold E. Stassen, governor of Minnesota. He opened his discussion of "Traverse des Sioux Yesterday and Today" by observing that the study of history adds to the richness of life and by complimenting the Minnesota Historical Society on its energetic work in preserving the records of the state's backgrounds. It is difficult to realize that only ninety years ago the Minnesota Valley had not yet been opened to settlement, the Governor remarked. He reminded his audience that its rapid development may be attributed in large part to the facts that the pioneers who settled there lived under a free government and practiced a free economy. He then went on to describe the events that transpired on this meeting ground of whites and Indians four and a half decades ago. For his detailed and colorful account, he drew upon the writings of two men who were present and who left reliable records of what they saw and heard at Traverse des Sioux—James M. Goodhue, editor of Minnesota's first newspaper, and Frank B. Mayer, an artist from Baltimore. The Governor described living conditions in the camp of thirty white men—government commissioners, traders, missionaries, and the like—who went to the Traverse for the treaty, and in the lodges of the thousands of Sioux who gathered there to cede their ancient hunting grounds. He told of the native ball games and dances with which the red men entertained the whites, of the quantities of beef and pork devoured by the Indians, of the elaborate costumes in which they appeared before the commissioners. Governor Stassen concluded by reviewing



the terms of the treaty and describing the response that the news of its conclusion inspired among waiting Minnesotans. The Governor's address will be made available for a wider audience by its publication in a future issue of this magazine.

Following this program, many of the visitors made a tour of St. Peter, viewing locations of interest suggested by Mr. Benson. Included were the houses occupied by five governors who resided in the community—Willis A. Gorman, Henry A. Swift, Horace Austin, Andrew R. McGill, and John A. Johnson. The tourists also visited the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College, the grounds of the St. Peter State Hospital, and the square where ambitious St. Peter pioneers erected a building intended for use as the Minnesota capitol.

The final session of the one-day tour followed a dinner at 6:00 P. M. in the air-cooled dining room of the Cook Hotel. Mr. Benson, who presided, first called upon Judge Julius E. Haycraft of Fairmont to present to the audience of about a hundred and fifty people some of his "Personal Recollections of St. Peter." Many of the speakers' memories were connected with his marriage to the daughter of a local pioneer. He told, too, of the newspapermen, physicians, lawyers, and other local celebrities whom he came to know during his frequent visits to St. Peter.

The principal address of the evening was presented by Mrs. Grace Flandrau of St. Paul, who chose as her subject "Makers of History in the Minnesota Valley." Woven into her story were such French names as Pierre Charles le Sueur, Joseph Renville, and J. N. Nicollet. When she turned to the founding of St. Peter, the speaker exploited the prominent role in its development that was played by her father-in-law, Charles E. Flandrau. She told how this young lawyer of French descent helped to select the site of the community for the St. Peter Company, how he removed from St. Paul to the new settlement and practiced law there,

how he served as a member of the Minnesota constitutional convention and later of the state supreme court. She then turned to his military career, describing his participation in the expeditions against the Sioux in 1857 and 1862, and giving special attention to his leadership in the defense of New Ulm. Flandrau's private life, too, was the subject of comment by the speaker, who closed by describing the house he built in St. Paul—the house that she still occupies. It is filled, she told the audience, with mementos of the Sioux War and of her father-in-law's life in St. Peter.

Following Mrs. Flandrau's intimate and fascinating review of the career of a St. Peter pioneer, Mr. Benson informed the audience that descendants and relatives of a number of the city's other prominent early residents were among those present. He then introduced Miss Helen Austin and her brother Herbert of St. Paul, a daughter and a son of Governor Austin, and Mr. Fred W. Johnson of New Ulm, a brother of Governor Johnson. Messages were read from descendants of Governors Swift and McGill, and from Miss Laura Furness, a granddaughter of Governor Ramsey. Since the latter was present at Traverse des Sioux in 1851, the city of St. Peter has a special interest in him, Mr. Benson said. These reminders that the nineteenth state historical convention had centered about Minnesota's "City of Governors" brought the meeting to a close.

B. L. H.

## SOME SOURCES FOR NORTHWEST HISTORY

### THE ARCHIVES OF MILITARY POSTS

THE GENERAL importance of military forts in the development of the Northwest is more or less familiar to the student, and formal histories of such posts as Crawford, Snelling, Abercrombie, and Sisseton gather data from many sources for easy consultation.<sup>1</sup> Much more is available, however, in the original records of these posts, now in the National Archives in Washington. There rich rewards await the person who wishes to go beyond general facts, to enter into the life and spirit of these outposts of American civilization. In the manuscript division of the Minnesota Historical Society are filmstrips of the archives of Fort Ridgely, and some for Fort Snelling. When these official sources are correlated with other sources of official and unofficial character—diaries, letters, newspapers, and other printed sources—a rather intimate knowledge of these frontier posts and their history is possible, on the basis of extensive documentation.

Professor Edgar B. Wesley has remarked that instead of an isolated center of warlike activities, the frontier military post was "an epitome of the entire civilization that was to follow."<sup>2</sup> Not only did these posts function to protect and foster American civilization; they were themselves a part of that civilization. The student of the archives of these posts expects them to tell the story of campaigns and battles, but he will also find that they tell much of frontier life in a some-

<sup>1</sup> See Bruce E. Mahan, *Old Fort Crawford and the Frontier* (Iowa City, 1926); Marcus L. Hansen, *Old Fort Snelling, 1819-1858* (Iowa City, 1918); *Fort Abercrombie, 1857-1877* (*North Dakota Historical Collections*, vol. 2, pt. 2—Bismarck, 1908); and Edward A. Hummel, "The Story of Fort Sisseton," in *South Dakota Historical Review*, 2: 126-144 (April, 1937).

<sup>2</sup> Wesley, "The Army and the Westward Movement," *ante*, 15:381.

what special setting. The soldiers' life in the western posts was not unlike that of other pioneers, who looked toward their military neighbors with pride and confidence.

Something of the nature of the archives of frontier posts in the Middle West will be conveyed by a brief account of some of the materials extant for Fort Ridgely on the upper Minnesota River. This fort was established in the spring of 1853 and it was occupied by the regular army until 1867, with the exception of the Civil War years, when it was garrisoned by companies of Minnesota volunteers. During this occupation the outbreak of the Minnesota Sioux occurred, and the stirring events of 1862 have underlined the importance of the fort in the history of the state. The events of the Sioux War, of the siege and relief of Fort Ridgely, more familiar than those of earlier and later date, have, however, overshadowed equally significant but less spectacular events. It is now possible to study the broader significance of the post on the frontier in times of peace as well as of war.

The official archives of Fort Ridgely comprise important series of records kept at the post, with only brief gaps, for the period during which it was occupied by the regular army. Faithful public servants have left a record of peace-time affairs which is not matched, in fact, by the record of times of war. Only the "Journal of Guard Mount" for the summer of 1862, now in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society, survives for the Civil War period when volunteers held the post. In the National Archives, however, are preserved long series of documents relating to the regular army at Fort Ridgely, all of major importance for historical purposes. The extant post documents are available in microfilm at the Minnesota Historical Society, with the exception of certain volumes of the "Guard Report Books," containing the record of trials by court-martial. Permission to copy these documents has been withheld. Something of their character is to be learned from similar proceedings available

elsewhere, as in the printed orders of the Department of the West.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the most informative documents for Fort Ridgely are the volumes of letters sent from this post, which extend from 1854 to 1860 and contain the record of the contact maintained between the post and the outside world. These volumes contain routine correspondence on post inspections, reports, post affairs, and the like, and their contents shed light on such matters as the physical condition and equipment of the post and its construction and maintenance. In the same series, also, are invaluable data on matters allied to military affairs, particularly on Indian affairs. With this series are to be correlated the miscellaneous letters received and the documents of superior offices, such as those of the Headquarters of the Army. The archives of the latter office were calendared some years ago by the Minnesota Historical Society, which also possesses copies of some of the original documents.

For the purpose of reconstructing life at Fort Ridgely, three types of records are especially useful. Though incomplete, they cover the periods from 1853 to 1859 and from 1866 to 1867, when the regular army occupied the fort. These series include "Order Books," "Consolidated Morning Report Books," and, most useful of all, "Proceedings of the Post Council of Administration." There are recorded in great detail the everyday affairs of the post. Included are data on expenditures from company funds for many purposes, such as for seed for company gardens, for books and periodicals for company libraries, the decisions made by the council at regular intervals setting fair prices for goods to be sold by the sutler, and the like. There one begins to see beneath the surface and to get fleeting glimpses of the

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Head Quarters Department of the West, *General Orders*, no. 2 (St. Louis, 1861). This order, which relates to court martial proceedings at Fort Ridgely, is one of a series of similar leaflets, now very rare, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society.

life of the frontier soldier, a subject hitherto somewhat obscured in historical accounts by a greater interest in events of strictly military importance.

Those who would imagine that the lot of the frontier soldier was an easy one need only refer to these archives for proof to the contrary. A post order of July 2, 1856, for example, furnishes data for interesting comparisons with army life today. The order directed that reveille was to be sounded no later than 4:30 A.M. It was to be followed by other bugle calls—surgeon's call at 6:15 A.M., breakfast call at 6:30 A.M., morning fatigue call at 7:00 A.M., guard mounting at 8:00 A.M., orderly call at 11:00 A.M., and recall from fatigue and dinner call at 12 M. Fatigue call was again sounded at 2:00 P.M., recall not before 7:00 P.M., retreat at sunset, tattoo at 9:30 P.M., and, lest the soldier lose his needed sleep, the signal to extinguish lights was sounded at 9:45 P.M. Such a schedule was doubtless changed with the seasons. In an order of August 30, 1856, reveille was set for 5:00 A.M., tattoo at 8:45 P.M., and the signal to extinguish lights at 9:00 P.M.

That fatigue periods were just as important as those of military training is clear from an order of September 30, 1856, which also indicates the close dependence of the post upon its own resources in such matters as the provision of fuel. It specified that the wood detail for the ensuing winter should consist of one commissioned officer, one sergeant, one corporal, and thirty privates, each officer, like the men, serving in his turn. The party was to be detailed for a week at a time to leave the post each morning at fatigue call and to return each evening with sunset. An officer was to accompany each detail and was held responsible for marching the party to and from the garrison "in proper order and without unnecessary detention." Care was to be taken to select trees that could be easily hauled to the post and were also least useful for lumber. Oak was to be preferred to other

varieties, and whenever available, dry and seasoned wood was to be taken. The wood was to be cut in convenient lengths, and was to be piled where it could be easily reached with carts, and the amounts cut were to be reported. "The quantity of fuel necessary," remarked the commandant, "is very large and to provide it in sufficient quantities will require the labor of the whole garrison for some time to come." It is not remarkable that army inspectors frequently complained that the frontier soldier's military training was neglected.

The full story of Fort Ridgely and of its significance on the Minnesota frontier is yet to be told, just as are the individual histories of many other western posts. The archives of these posts, however, reveal much about the nature of existence on the military frontier, and historians are grateful that they are available in such fullness.

G. HUBERT SMITH

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## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### CASS GILBERT AND WILBUR WRIGHT

THE INFANCY of a mode of transportation that is playing a major role in the present world conflict is vividly recalled in a document recently discovered in the archives of the Minnesota Historical Society. It is a record of an interview between Cass Gilbert, the distinguished architect who began his professional career in St. Paul and who designed the Minnesota Capitol, and Wilbur Wright, one of the two brothers who invented the airplane. The date of the interview, October 5, 1909, is significant, for on the previous day Wright had made a momentous flight. The occasion was the Hudson-Fulton celebration in New York, which Wright marked by tracing "in the air part of the voyage made . . . by Henry Hudson in his ship the *Half Moon* three centuries before." From Governors Island the pioneer aviator flew upstream to Grant's Tomb and back. Below, in New York Harbor, was anchored an international fleet, including American, British, French, German, Italian, and Dutch warships, peacefully assembled to participate in an American celebration.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of this flight in the history of aviation may be judged from the fact that one of its results was the organization of the American Wright Company, with a factory at Dayton, Ohio, for the manufacture of airplanes.<sup>2</sup> Evidence that Gilbert sensed the significance of Wright's accomplishments is to be found not only in the following document, but in a letter that accompanied it. It is addressed to Dr. Warren Upham, then secretary of the historical so-

<sup>1</sup> John R. McMahon, *The Wright Brothers: Fathers of Flight*, 237 (Boston, 1930); *New York Tribune*, September 28, 1909.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Klemin, "Wilbur Wright," in *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20: 570; McMahon, *The Wright Brothers*, 242, 243.



ciety. "I have set down my impressions for record as I occasionally do in matters of this kind," writes Gilbert in referring to his talk with Wright. "It occurs to me to send you a copy," he continues, "for at some time in the future, perhaps a generation or two hence, it may be interesting to find in the files of the Minnesota Historical Society such a record precisely as we would now be interested in reading of Robert Fulton, the inventor of the steamboat."

Certainly the future day toward which Gilbert looked thirty-two years ago has now arrived. With the permission of Mrs. Gilbert, her husband's record of an interview with Wilbur Wright is herewith published for the first time.

#### MEMORANDUM

Dict'd by MR. CASS GILBERT

October 5, 1909

I called on Mr. Wilbur Wright at the Park Hotel, Park Avenue and 33rd Street, New York, this morning and invited him to be present at the banquet of the American Institute of Architects in Washington in December. Mr. Wright stated that he expected to be in the South at that time and would probably not be able to attend. He says that he is going to Washington today and will remain there several weeks. I told him that I would ask Mr. Glenn Brown to send him a formal invitation and that I hoped he would be able to attend. I explained that at the Institute's Convention this year we were discussing the subject of transportation in relation to civic development and that it had several times been suggested that his invention of the aeroplane would eventuate in the modification of the designs of buildings and that he might talk on the transportation of the future. The suggestion was made in a humorous vein and he smiled as I said it. He answered "I do not believe that there will be any reason for changing buildings on this account for a long time to come. I like to avoid flying over cities and sky-scrapers." . . .

His personality interested me very much. He is a man a little below average height, very slender and wiry in build. He is smooth shaven and his face is wrinkled and without much color. His eyes are a greenish blue. He occasionally looked straight at me with a very frank, clear expression but more often looked slightly to the right and

downwards. He seemed to be quite unostentatious and without any pose of manner. Very simple and direct and of few words, modestly spoken. He smiled occasionally with a sort of half smile that did not give me the impression of much exuberance of spirit but rather of a provincial boy who had an underlying sense of humor and a perfect confidence in himself but with a slightly provincial cynicism as to how seriously the other man might regard him or his views. He was totally impassive and I should say unimpressible so far as the surface went, but probably very keenly sensitive, and on the whole rather the type of high grade, intelligent and well read mechanic whom I occasionally meet in connection with building work. He looked like the student and the shop man rather than the man of affairs or the pushing administrator of a factory. He held a card in one hand which he constantly tapped or twirled against the other hand in a very nervous manner as though he were somewhat ill at ease though his entire self-possession and modest self-confidence belied the nervousness. It was as though some physical or mental strain through which he had passed had keyed him up to a point where his hand must be in motion, not at all as though he were impatient of his visitor or eager to leave him. I had noticed the same action while he was talking with a reporter just before I spoke to him. He was dressed in very plain dark business clothes of indefinite color, probably dark grey, and wore a derby hat throughout the conversation which only added to the general inconspicuous aspect of the man.

I remember distinctly that in answering my questions or replying he would look directly into my face and the sort of a wan, half cynical but kindly smile would flit across his countenance and disappear.

There is absolutely nothing romantic or distinguished in his dress, appearance or manner. He told me that he was born in Indiana and I laughingly said that I was born in Ohio and that when I was a boy we used to speak of the people of his state as "Hoosiers" whereat the wan smile again flitted across his countenance.

Just before leaving him I put my hand on his arm and looking him straight in the face said very seriously, "Mr. Wright I want to tell you that in common with all of your countrymen we are proud of you and of what you have accomplished and the way you have gone about it. The serious men of this country appreciate that you are working seriously to accomplish a scientific result and hope that you will keep

right on. The real men are glad that you don't make an acrobatic or circus performance out of the machine as some others seem inclined to do." He cut in and said "I never was much on circus performances anyway." I added, "We are proud of you and wish you every success and hope you will keep right along in the way you have been working." While I was saying this he shook hands with me warmly and looked me straight in the face evidently deeply appreciating the sincerity with which it was said, and I felt that he fully responded to it although he did not express it in words.

It was yesterday morning (October 4, 1909) that he "flew" from Governors Island up the Hudson River to Grant's Tomb, passing over the war ships anchored up near the Tomb and returned to Governors Island making the whole trip of 19 miles in about 30 minutes. Mr. Alexander Stewart with whom I dined last night at the banquet given to Admiral Seymour of the British Navy at the Waldorf-Astoria had told me that he had seen the flight from his office and that he thought Mr. Wright on his upward trip went about 35 miles an hour and on the return trip at about 60 miles an hour. Mr. Stewart spoke particularly of his flying part of the time very low, scarcely 15 or 20 feet above the water, and that as a ferry boat crossed his path he went directly toward it until he had almost reached it, then rising gracefully passed over it and came down to the lower level and returning to the Island hovering only a few feet above the water. The newspapers state this morning that part of the flight was at a considerable altitude, probably about 400 feet above the water. When Mr. Stewart and I were talking last night I made the remark that the war ships in the harbor probably represented the highest type of naval construction that the world had ever seen but that this little flying machine of Wright's was the beginning of an epoch that would make them all obsolete.

It is particularly interesting to meet Mr. Wright at this time when the City of New York is celebrating Hudson's discovery of the river and Robert Fulton's invention of the steamboat.

I have dictated this impression of Wilbur Wright within two hours after I met him for I wish to record while fresh in my mind the impressions that were made upon me at the time.

CASS GILBERT

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS

*The United States, Great Britain, and British North America from the Revolution to the Establishment of Peace after the War of 1812.* By A. L. BURT, professor of history, University of Minnesota. (New Haven, Yale University Press, for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of Economics and History, 1940. vii, 448 p. Maps. \$3.25.)

The American Revolution, which brought independence to the thirteen colonies, created as many problems as it solved. A delimitation of territorial frontiers became necessary and a policy governing their fortification, highly desirable. Commercial intercourse needed the stabilization of international agreement. The rights of New England fishermen in British North American waters required definition. Last, and perhaps most important, the Indian question, with its complicated three-cornered relationships of governments with one another and with native tribesmen, called for an almost continuous adjustment of conflicting interests.

Not all these problems were solved by 1818. Disputes over boundaries, fisheries, and commerce occasioned many tense moments in later years. Nevertheless, the diplomatic settlement following the War of 1812 did mark a turning point. Thereafter the shadow of revolution no longer fell across the pages of long confidential dispatches. Diplomacy was concerned with issues arising from the expansion and growth of the United States, not from the winning of their independence.

Professor Burt writes of these topics with an assurance born of thorough familiarity with the official records and transcripts preserved in the Public Archives of Canada. These materials have never been fully exploited. For that reason his fresh appraisal of the factors determining British policy in North America is particularly welcome.

The author is frankly revisionist in his interpretation of the Indian problem. In his opinion British policy was determined by political and military considerations rather than by the memorials of the fur traders. Its purpose was not to perpetuate British control over the western tribes, but, on the contrary, to help them to adapt themselves

to American rule. British influence was thus exerted for peace, not for war. The occupation of the posts on the Great Lakes was intended "to cover the withdrawal of British trading commitments on the American side of the line." Indian affairs were managed as a part of Canadian defense. Suffering from neglect during periods of security, they were improved and utilized for belligerent purposes when, as in 1794 and 1811, the threat of American aggression seemed imminent.

Such are the views presented, and for the most part the argument is convincing. The author marshals his facts with care and makes his points with characteristic vigor. If his narrative is somewhat narrowly confined to official correspondence, the reason is that he is interested in explaining the considerations that influenced the judgment of responsible officials. Thus the files of governmental records must necessarily be his main reliance. It should be pointed out, however, that important collections of American archival materials have been largely overlooked. The approach of the United States government to the Indian problem is only partially revealed in the published *American State Papers*. The Indian office letter books and war department files now preserved in the National Archives are equally deserving of study. An examination of these and other unpublished sources would have made possible a more adequate analysis of American policy. The government trading houses might have been given a place in the story, and the interrelations of Indian policy and land policy could have been suggested.

The Napoleonic wars brought still other problems. The author discusses maritime issues and the War of 1812, offering no important new disclosures, but making the most of the familiar source materials. Rejecting Julius Pratt's conclusions, he attributes the drift toward war to a rising sense of national ignominy occasioned by repeated insults on the seas. Military impotence, he asserts, made measures of force impossible, yet made them the more necessary if national self-respect was to be regained. Amicable adjustment he thinks might have been possible if Jefferson had been willing to accept the judgment of Monroe and Pinkney in 1807, or if Canning had approved the Erskine agreement in 1809. With each succeeding diplomatic failure, however, the deadlock became more complete. Finally, in 1812, backed by a group of more vigorous nationalists, the Madison

government cut the Gordian knot. War was allowed to decide the issue, whether America was prepared for it or not.

American expansionism is considered a factor of secondary importance, real, but not decisive. If land operations were to be carried on at all, Canada would inevitably be the object of attack. Where else could the blow on Britain fall? Englishmen and Americans alike anticipated a drive against Canada long before the annexationists raised their cry. The belligerency of West and South is further explained in terms of a comfortable remoteness from probable attack and a resentment of the economic stringency brought about by the loss of markets for Southern staples.

Professor Burt condemns American military strategy during the war as a "colossal blunder." To be sure, he finds the campaign on the Niagara-Detroit frontier quite comprehensible. The infiltration of Americans into Upper Canada, effected by a process of social "osmosis," made that region the logical place to launch a war of liberation. Yet the political advantage seems to him more than overbalanced by the dissipation of military energies in engagements that were necessarily indecisive.

The attempt to negotiate peace under a Russian mediation is dismissed as a "wild goose chase," and such in fact it proved to be. Yet the present reviewer questions whether the American effort should be considered as wholly fruitless or unrealistic. The subservience of Russia and Sweden to Britain's wishes in the matter of maritime rights was not to be assumed without proof. The measures taken by Britain to defeat the American step bear witness to the shrewdness of it. Under the circumstances, there was nothing to be lost and much to be gained by sending a peace mission to Europe. Its very presence there might serve the American cause. What better course could have been adopted?

The book as a whole is eminently satisfying. It is a masterly survey of early Canadian-American relations, closely packed with facts and constructed with admirable craftsmanship. Authoritative and readable, it should be on the "must" list for all students of American diplomatic history.

CHARLES M. GATES

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*Minutes of Council, Northern Department of Rupert Land, 1821-31.*

Edited by R. HARVEY FLEMING, B. Comm., University of Toronto. With an introduction by H. A. INNIS, M. A., Ph. D. (Published by the Champlain Society for the Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1940. lxxvii, 480 p. Frontispiece.)

This is a volume of great value for the study of Minnesota history, particularly for the areas lying along the international boundary waters and in the Red River Valley during a decade for which there has been scant material heretofore.

The year 1821 was a landmark in the history of much of northern and western North America. At that time the great rivals, the Hudson's Bay and Northwest companies, united; and in that year also George Simpson began to be a great power in the new company's affairs. Throughout the period covered by this book and for thirty more years he continued his driving, efficient, somewhat ruthless, and cynical leadership. His is the unlovely but unifying personality of this book, and it is interesting and instructive to watch both his power and his craft develop.

Though the book presents the same data in three forms, the average reader will be only grateful for the repetition, since it is difficult at best to distinguish the forest from the trees in Hudson's Bay Company's business and governmental affairs. Mr. Innis' introduction digests the minutes of council for the reader. He also interprets much of the correspondence, particularly Simpson's, which forms the third part of the book. The minutes proper form the main part of the volume.

These are the three forms the data take, and he will be a wise reader who goes to the introduction first. There he will find an explanation of the term "Rupert Land"; of the division of the company's territories into two areas for jurisdictional purposes, the Northern and the Southern departments; of the positions held by Simpson in his rise to power; and of the ways by which the company carried on a great and intricate business.

Minnesotans will be interested in the many details pertaining to the Rainy Lake, or Lac la Pluie district, which included posts on Basswood Lake and Lake of the Woods. Dr. John McLoughlin was associated with that area shortly after the volume opens, but soon he was transferred to the Columbia River district, and the former chief factor there, John Dugald Cameron, was sent to Rainy Lake. Roderick McKenzie,

Jr., and Simon McGillivray were chief traders in the district for a time, and Charles W. Bouck served there for some fifteen years as a clerk. Another clerk was William Clouston, whose post was usually at Whitefish Lake, a part of Lake of the Woods. A chief trader was deemed necessary for Basswood Lake. Simon McGillivray was there for a time and Thomas McMurray served there for many years. Bouck was also there for a period. The man in charge for the winter was often not the director of the post during the summer months. This fact causes some apparent discrepancies between the journals and reports from the post on the one hand and the minutes of council on the other. Incidentally, there is also considerable variation in the spelling of proper names in the two sets of records. It is to be hoped that someday a volume of the Hudson's Bay Record Society will consist of the diaries, reports, and correspondence of the Lac la Pluie district.

In 1831 only an interpreter, whose name is not mentioned, was found necessary for the Basswood post. The changed status of the post was due to a "tacit agreement . . . with the American Fur Company as to territorial jurisdiction." In other words, competition by American traders had been stopped by 1831. The company's avowed purpose was to deplete competition areas of their beaver, and so very competent men were put in charge of those districts. Before 1831 the Rainy Lake district was considered such an area, and that fact explains its prominence in council minutes and correspondence. It must be added that in areas of little or no competition, definite attempts at conservation of beaver life were made, as the minutes reveal year after year.

Quite a little new light is thrown on the character and activities of Joseph Renville, or Ranville, of the Lake Traverse area. There the company had a post when the book opens, though it was soon discontinued because of violent American opposition. A certain trip by Renville to collect a debt at Pembina in 1822, flanked by wild Sioux braves, is reported in some detail. It was a bizarre and rather ignominious affair, but quite in keeping with Renville's character.

There are many other items of Minnesota interest, but the emphasis of the book, naturally, is on larger and more important areas, such as York Factory, the Columbia River district, and the Red River settlements. For these and many other districts there is a vast amount of detail.

Two more volumes for the Northern Department and one for the



Southern will utilize the council minutes till 1870. It is a tribute to the company, to Mr. Fleming and Mr. Innis, and especially to the faithful Miss Alice M. Johnson, who is steadily at work in the archives in bomb-torn London, that this fine, scholarly volume appears this year.

GRACE LEE NUTE

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ST. PAUL

*Vanguards of the Frontier: A Social History of the Northern Plains and Rocky Mountains from the Earliest White Contacts to the Coming of the Homemaker.* By EVERETT DICK, Ph.D. (New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1941. xvi, 574 p. Illustrations. \$5.00.)

Those who enjoyed the fascinating social history by Everett Dick in the *Sod House Frontier* recall his vivid descriptions of life among permanent settlers—farmers, doctors, lawyers, and others who came to make their homes on the western prairies. In this companion volume, Dr. Dick has collected voluminous information about the activities of other groups of white men seeking their living beyond the advance of settlement in the land west of the Mississippi River. Fur traders, trappers, soldiers, Indian agents, missionaries, miners, boatmen, freighters, express riders, telegraph and railroad builders, lumberjacks, buffalo hunters, surveyors, cowboys, and sheep herders are among the characters described in pages crowded with curious anecdotes and colorful descriptions.

Most of Mr. Dick's subjects traveled daily or at frequent intervals, camping along their way, and the theme is that of life on the march. How the people adjusted themselves to the routine of caravan or steamboat offers many contrasts. Mormon ladies conducted quilting parties on their western pilgrimage, and ingenious men of their number measured the daily mileage by devices fastened on wagon wheels, wrote guidebooks, and constructed ferries that were commercialized to advantage in the western traffic. Packers on the Sante Fé trail planted mint along their route to be used by weary travelers for refreshing drinks. Turkeys crossed the plains to market in Denver. Even the cattle became so habituated to a life of travel that they had to be retrained to stay in one place when they reached their destinations. Occasionally there is a wearisome similarity in the travel epic;

for example, tin cups, plates, and kettles were repeated in the equipment lists of surveyor, hunter, trapper, and prospector, and dried apples and salt pork were of universal importance in their food supplies. But even in these cases the reader finds interesting inclusions, for soldiers on the plains in the 1870's had a variety of vegetables—steamed, pressed, and dried—to carry conveniently in packs on scouting expeditions.

Over thirty illustrations, reproduced from contemporary periodicals, paintings, and photographs, have been selected with care. The comprehensive bibliography is conveniently arranged to aid in further reading on each subject.

The geographical territory embraced in this volume has been enlarged from that of the *Sod House Frontier* to include, according to the author, the "whole northern portion of the United States from the Mississippi to, and including, the Rocky Mountains." Minnesota west of the Mississippi, however, is of minor importance in the general sweep of the book. There is mention of fur traders, Indian agents, missionaries, life at Fort Snelling, and boat and wagon traffic along the Red River, but the most vivid chapters are those dealing with life along the Platte and the Missouri. Only prairie game is considered in market hunting. The chapter on lumbering, which does refer entirely to Minnesota and Wisconsin, seems almost inappropriate in a book dealing largely with the movement overland by stagecoach, pony express, steamboat, or railroad.

The helpful end-paper maps, with numerous locations for Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas, some for Wyoming, and fewer for Montana, Colorado, and Minnesota, give a key to the region under consideration. It is not clear, however, why Cold Spring or St. Peter in Minnesota appear on the maps at all. This reviewer was unable to locate any mention of the former in the text, and references to "St. Peter's" all mean the settlement at Mendota, not the town indicated on the map. The St. Peter's River and the Minnesota River are listed separately in the index and are mentioned several times in the text without indication that the names refer to the same stream. Minnesota readers will find this book of greatest value for learning about western and southwestern neighbors, since it contains little that is new or unique about the upper Mississippi Valley.

EVADENE BURRIS SWANSON

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*The Hero in America: A Chronicle of Hero Worship.* By DIXON WECTER. (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1941. 530, viii p. Illustrations. \$3.50.)

The American people, leading an unsettled life and confronted with change on every side, have an urgent need for symbols of permanence and unity: the flag, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the great men whom they regard as institutions. There are certain basic requirements for America's heroes. They must be men whom democracy has selected, not those who have been thrust upon it; they must have rendered public service; they must be doers of deeds, although modestly disclaiming any pre-eminence or excellence; they must be men of high reputations. If the public likes them, it is likely to call them by nicknames; it may vilify and caricature them; it will probably sympathize with their struggles with misfortune, physical or economic; but it will never deify them until they have died, preferably at the height of conquest. "The hero who gives his life as the last sacrifice in the crucible of fire is supremely great."

All these and many more things about hero worship Mr. Wecter tells in this examination of those to whom the American nation has given more or less permanent recognition. The traditional heroes of history are all considered here—Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Jackson, Lincoln, Lee, and Grant; some secondary ones—Captain John Smith, Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, Johnny Appleseed, and Buffalo Bill; and a twentieth-century group whose achievements are too recent to make their places in the hall of fame secure—Bryan, Edison, Ford, Wilson, Lindbergh, and the two Roosevelts.

The book is not a mere collection of biographies of the great and the near great; it is rather a probing for the bases of their fame. The author examines the mass mind to evolve a pattern of hero worship. He presents the career of the hero, pointing out what traits and what actions most endeared him to the people, and what they said and thought about him. He seeks to determine whether his subject's fame is the result of fortunate circumstances, of deliberate propaganda, of the adverse fortunes of close rivals, or of the personal attributes of the hero himself. In this fashion, and without the aid of a modern Gallup poll, he charts the rise and fall of popular favor, with explanations of success and ventures of predictions of future trends.

The author has been aided in his preparation by a study of contemporary opinion in the form of pamphlets, cartoons, and newspapers, a perusal of "fan mail" wherever it has been available, verbal consultations with authorities on special subjects, and a wide reading of the mass of current productions in the field of biography. There are numerous sketches of minor figures, and discussions and commentaries on phases in the reading habits of Americans, such as the almanac era, the McGuffey's *Reader* influence, and the dime novel vogue. The narrative is enlivened by the inclusion of anecdotes and incidents and apt quotations, and by the author's own humorous phrasing and epigrams. Woodcuts at the beginning of each of the eighteen chapters, thirty full-page illustrations, footnotes, and an index complete the volume, which is appropriately bound in red and blue.

The writer of the more serious type of biography, compelled to consider every aspect of his subject's career, as well as the interplay of motives and events, may begrudge Mr. Wecter his opportunity for selectiveness in a work of this nature. But no charge of oversimplification or inadequacy of treatment can be justly brought against a production that so ably fulfills its design, as does this one, of telling the story of leadership in America as mirrored in its heroes and in hero worship.

ALICE E. SMITH

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN  
MADISON

*Consumers' Cooperatives in the North Central States.* By LEONARD C. KERCHER, VANT W. KEBKER, and WILFRED C. LELAND, JR. Edited by ROLAND S. VAILE. (Minneapolis, The University of Minnesota Press, 1941. xvi, 431 p. \$3.50.)

This is the best book that has appeared about the consumers' co-operatives in the United States. In closely packed form, the authors present a mass of information concerning the workings of consumers' co-operative enterprises in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Although it is not an easy book to read, it will probably serve as a handbook for present and future "co-ops."

The editor has divided the book into three sections. The first two sections analyze the general functions and possibilities of consumers' co-operatives, and the third section presents case histories of various individual co-operatives. There is a selected bibliography, but no

index. Numerous tables present data on the practical aspects of the various co-operatives studied. Several maps locate the individual co-operatives and special and regional groupings.

The first section, by Professor Kercher, pays special attention to the Finnish co-operatives. He shows how they grew out of the Social Democratic movement which the Finnish immigrants brought with them. An additional cause was the social and personal insecurity in the north woods region about the turn of the century. This area had a declining lumber industry, its mining was subject to severe fluctuations, and agriculture was only getting a toehold. In such a situation, consumers' co-operatives promised to conserve income, at the same time that they fitted in with the ideological background of the Finnish immigrants. Professor Kercher traces the growth of individual co-operatives and of the local and regional federations which followed the spread of successful co-operation.

In the second section Mr. Kebker looks at consumers' co-operatives from the standpoint of the economist. In a dynamic society, changes in fashion and technology, monopolistic competition, monetary fluctuations, and private ownership present grave problems for the consumers' co-operatives as well as for the privately owned firm. To take just one problem: shall co-operatives try to follow the whims of fashion, with an occasional piling up of inventory as a result, or shall they concentrate on standardized goods and allow their members to purchase some of their goods elsewhere? Mr. Kebker analyzes these problems and proposes some solutions. This theoretical analysis would not be complete without a discussion of a co-operative commonwealth, and Mr. Kebker concludes his section with a brief survey of the theoretical bases of such a commonwealth. This is probably the weakest chapter in the book, for it is difficult to present a blueprint for an ideal society in fifteen pages.

The last section is the most interesting part of the book to the historian. In it, Professor Kercher and Mr. Leland have given the case histories of a number of co-operative organizations. These include the co-operative at Cloquet, and the Central Cooperative Wholesale of Superior. In the future, students of the economic and social history of the North Central area will of necessity turn to this section for source materials.

RODNEY C. LOEHR

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
MINNEAPOLIS

## MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES

MR. VERNE E. CHATELAIN ("The Federal Land Policy and Minnesota Politics, 1845-60") is director, with the co-operation of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, of the St. Augustine Historical Program at St. Augustine, Florida. In 1929-30 he served as acting assistant superintendent of the society, and he contributed an article on "The Public Land Officer on the Northwestern Frontier" to the issue of this magazine for December, 1931. Dr. Merrill E. Jarchow ("Early Minnesota Agricultural Societies and Fairs") is a member of the history faculty in the South Dakota State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts at Brookings. He is the author of an unpublished study of the history of agriculture in Minnesota. Dr. Grace Lee Nute ("Hudson's Bay Company Posts in the Minnesota Country"), curator of manuscripts on the society's staff, is well-known to readers of this magazine for her articles and book reviews, especially in the fields of the French and British regimes in the Northwest. Her latest book, *The Voyageur's Highway*, was published by the society in June of this year. Mr. G. Hubert Smith ("The Archives of Military Posts") is assistant state supervisor of the Minnesota State-wide Archaeological and Historical Research Survey. For the National Park Service, he directed excavations on the site of Fort Ridgely from 1936 to 1939, and his account of what was accomplished there appears in this magazine for June, 1939. The reviewers include Dr. Charles M. Gates of the department of history in the University of Washington at Seattle; Dr. Rodney C. Loehr of the history faculty in the University of Minnesota; Miss Alice E. Smith, curator of manuscripts on the staff of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; and Dr. Evadene Burris Swanson, who has contributed numerous articles and book reviews to this magazine.

The first edition of *The Voyageur's Highway* by Dr. Nute, issued by the society in June, has been completely exhausted, and a second edition, consisting of three thousand copies, has been published. Members who wish to purchase extra copies of this work may obtain them from the society at seventy-five cents each. The fact that four

thousand copies of this work were disposed of in three months is only one indication of the enthusiasm with which it was received. Hundreds of letters of appreciation, usually accompanied by orders, reached the society and the author during the summer. They came from as far east as Delaware, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and New York; as far west as California and Montana; and as far south as Texas. Such Minnesota resorts as Gunflint Lodge and the Wilderness Outfitters of Ely disposed of hundreds of copies of the volume during the tourist season, and Twin City book stores ordered them by the dozen.

Miss Marjorie Edgar's article on "Imaginary Animals of Northern Minnesota," which appeared in the issue of this magazine for September, 1940, is reprinted under the title "Legendary Minnesota Animals" in the *Conservation Volunteer* for May. The June issue of the same magazine contains a revised version of Dr. Nute's paper on "The Lure of Old Frontenac," originally presented at the Frontenac session of the state historical convention of 1939.

On August 15 Dr. Guy Stanton Ford became managing editor of the *American Historical Review*. Dr. Ford, who retired as president of the University of Minnesota in June, is a former president of the Minnesota Historical Society and a member of its executive council.

Dr. Nute is the author of an "interpretation of the Richard Haines murals" in the *Fort Snelling Round Tower*, which was published in the form of a six-page leaflet for distribution during the Eucharistic Congress in June. A special exhibit of six water colors by Peter Rindisbacher, arranged jointly by the society and the Fort Snelling authorities, is now on display in the Round Tower Museum. They are shown through the courtesy of the United States Military Academy at West Point, which owns eighteen paintings of Minnesota interest by this artist (see *ante*, 20: 54-57). Future exhibits of the remaining pictures have been planned.

A correspondence course on Minnesota history was conducted for the University of Minnesota by Dr. Beeson during the spring quarter.

The following nineteen members joined the society during the quarter ending on June 30: Dr. C. A. Aling of Minneapolis, Dr. H. B. Annis of Minneapolis, Dr. Harvey O. Beek of St. Paul, the Rev. R. J. Connole of St. Paul, George B. Engberg of Cambridge,

Herbert C. Feig of Raymond, Oscar E. Goethe of St. Paul, Mrs. Serena H. Goward of Aitkin, Anna B. Green of St. Paul, Paul S. Harris of Minneapolis, Dr. T. J. Kinsella of Minneapolis, Dr. C. J. Martinson of Wayzata, Mrs. Otto Metzroth of St. Cloud, Gertrude E. Murtfeldt of Minneapolis, Mrs. Anna R. Richardson of St. Paul, Harold J. Richardson of St. Paul, Raymond A. Scallen of Minneapolis, Mrs. Bunn T. Willson of Rochester, and Cushing F. Wright of St. Paul.

The historical societies of Crow Wing and Pope counties became institutional members of the society during the second quarter of 1941.

In the three months from April 1 to June 30, the society lost five members by death—Charles H. McGill of St. Paul on April 7, Dr. Albin E. Westling of Minneapolis on April 12, W. E. Easton of Stillwater on May 23, Mrs. Mary A. Brisley of Minneapolis on May 31, and John Fesenbeck of Cloquet on June 14.

The superintendent spoke on the society and its work before the St. Paul chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution meeting in the Historical Building on April 8, on "Minnesota Geographic Names" before an organization of the Andrew Presbyterian Church of Minneapolis on May 16, on "The Roots of the Community" before the Rice County Historical Society at Northfield on May 20, on "The Story of Transportation in Minnesota" before the Cook County Historical Society at Grand Portage on June 7, on the county historical society and its work before the Pipestone County Old Settlers Historical Society at Pipestone on June 14, and on "What the Museum Means to the Community" at the dedication of the museum of the Washington County Historical Society at Stillwater on June 20. Miss Nute presented an address on "Hudson's Bay Company Posts in the Minnesota Country" before the Mississippi Valley Historical Association meeting in Milwaukee on April 24; she spoke on the "Adventures of an Author" at Hamline University on April 7; and she participated in an interview on early Minnesota settlements in the vicinity of Fort Snelling over radio station WMIN on June 2. Mr. Babcock spoke on "The Lure of Minnesota" before the Newport Women's Club on April 23, on "The History of Old Grand Portage" before the Washington High School Faculty Club of St.



Paul on April 30, on "Carver's Cave" before the St. Paul Junior Pioneer Association on May 1, and on "Things Past and Things Present" at the dedication of the Galtier memorial in St. Paul on June 10. "Historic Spots in Minnesota" was the title of a talk given by Mr. Beeson before members of an American Legion auxiliary in Minneapolis on June 17.

Does anyone have a copy of the *Minneapolis City Directory* for 1905 that he would be willing to donate to the society? The library's copy of this volume is so worn from frequent use that it can no longer be rebound. Directories, like census records, are receiving heavy use at present by individuals who are searching for proof of residence, birth, and citizenship.

#### ACCESSIONS

Northeastern Minnesota in 1856 is described in the part of the diary of Joseph T. Mills that has been photographed for the society through the courtesy of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Mills traveled up the St. Croix River through Pine and Carlton counties to Superior, made an excursion along the North Shore of Lake Superior, and followed the course of the St. Louis River.

Some sixty letters written by Knute Nelson during the Civil War are among the valuable additions to his papers recently presented by his daughter, Mrs. Ida G. Nelson of Alexandria (see *ante*, 14: 437). The future Minnesota senator wrote most of these letters during the years from 1861 to 1864 while he was serving with the Fourth Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. Most of them are written in Norwegian. Included in the gift are Nelson's notes on the election of 1863 and on various phases of the war. There is also a description, "written to pass away time" at Baton Rouge in the fall and winter of 1863-64, of the three Christmas days spent in the army.

A record of the Granges organized in Minnesota from 1868 to 1873 by Oliver H. Kelley, Daniel R. Farnham, and others is to be found in a manuscript volume recently received from Mr. Usher L. Burdick of Washington. The name of the organizer, the date of organization, the number of charter members, and the names of the officers from 1869 to 1873 are given for each Grange.

Dr. James C. Ferguson of St. Paul has presented thirty letters written to Thomas R. Forbes, a son of Major William H. Forbes, who was long connected with the Minnesota fur trade and who later served as Indian agent at Fort Totten. The letters were written between 1874 and 1876, while the younger Forbes was a student in St. Mary's College at Montreal. Most of them were written from Fort Totten by his mother, who tells of life at the Dakota military post and reports on the death of Major Forbes in 1875. Dr. Ferguson also has presented a miniature trunk, once the property of Major Forbes, in which papers were placed for safekeeping, a carpetbag, and a toy threshing machine.

An account book kept from 1885 to 1924 by William D. Morse of Minneapolis has been presented by his son, Dr. Horace T. Morse of the University of Minnesota, through the courtesy of Dr. Rodney C. Loehr of St. Paul. The financial accounts of the Minnesota and Dakota Realty Company, of which Morse was vice-president, and of the insurance firm of Morris and Morse are included in the volume. In the name of Mrs. Carl Newbury of Walnut Creek, California, Dr. Morse also has presented several articles of women's clothing and a breech-loading cavalry carbine.

Drawings, books, and pamphlets relating to his career are the gifts of Mr. Charles L. Bartholomew of Minneapolis, who is widely known as a cartoonist under the pseudonym of "Bart." Included are the original drawings for thirty-three cartoons prepared for the *Minneapolis Journal* and relating for the most part to topics of local interest, and two books of cartoons reprinted from the *Journal* of 1895 and 1904. There are also a number of books and articles about Mr. Bartholomew's work and about his connection with the Federal School of Illustrating and Cartooning of Minneapolis.

A copy of a doctoral dissertation on the "Economic History of Minnesota Agriculture from 1837 to the Beginning of Diversification," submitted by Merrill E. Jarchow in the University of Minnesota in 1941, is the gift of the author. Mr. Milan W. Jerabek has presented a copy of a master's thesis on the "Czechs in Minnesota," prepared at the University of Minnesota in 1939.

An Assumption sash of a type worn by the voyageurs of the fur trade era is the gift of Miss Annie Carpenter of St. Paul. This sash,

which is six inches wide and nearly eleven feet long, was obtained by the donor's father, probably in the neighborhood of Pembina. It is woven in an arrow-like design in red, blue, green, and yellow stripes, and is typical of the sashes manufactured in L'Assomption County, near Montreal. The voyageurs fastened to such sashes the beaded pouches in which they carried their pipes, tobacco, and accessories. The sashes also were staple articles of barter in the fur trade with the Indians.

Several interesting items relating to the career of Colonel Josiah Snelling, who built the Minnesota fort that bears his name, have been presented by members of the Snelling family. A large silver watch that Snelling carried during the War of 1812 is the gift of the Misses Abbie H. and Marion I. Snelling of Peoria, Illinois. His commission as a lieutenant, issued in 1808, and a silver mourning ring worn by his widow after his death in 1828 have been presented by Mrs. L. W. Hall and Miss Marion Snelling Hall of Cincinnati.

Among the Civil War items added to the military collection are an octagon barreled rifle, from Mr. Thorn Rice of St. Paul, and a pair of epaulettes and a sash, from Mr. R. D. Stewart of St. Paul. A khaki uniform coat worn by a member of the Thirteenth Minnesota Volunteer Infantry in the Spanish-American War is the gift of Mr. A. C. O'Brien of St. Paul. In the name of the Third United States Infantry, Major Floyd E. Eller of Fort Snelling has presented a German artillery helmet and eleven framed photographs of Fort Snelling.

A number of articles that belonged to and were used by Bishop Henry B. Whipple have been received from his granddaughters, Mrs. J. W. Burt and Mrs. B. W. Scandrett of St. Paul, and from Mrs. W. D. Beadie of Windom. Included are a clergyman's coat and hat, a purple stole, a convocation robe, five hoods representing honorary degrees awarded by English universities, and a leather hatbox.

A large silver loving cup presented to Bishop James D. Morrison of Duluth in 1921 and a photograph of the bishop have been received from the estate of the late Mrs. Harriet T. Morrison of Ogdensburg, New York.

Fifty-seven coins, most of which are of Scandinavian origin, a bronze medal of the University of Christiania, and badges of the Nor-

wegian Singing Society's American trip of 1905, of the National Rivers and Harbors Congress of 1924, and of the Norwegian Knife and Fork Club, all from the estate of the late E. H. Hobe of St. Paul, have been presented by his daughter, Mrs. Ragnhild Brodie of New Orleans.

A two-piece white challis wedding dress, worn in 1890 by Mrs. Carrie Dockstader and presented by her daughter, Mrs. Irma Cummings of St. Paul, is a recent addition to the society's costume collection. A high-school graduation dress, a brocaded velveteen basque, and several pieces of jewelry are the gifts of Miss Frances Densmore of Red Wing. Miss Cecelia Otis of Tarrytown, New York, has presented a brown silk brocaded skirt of the late 1870's, a two-piece green dress, and a black taffeta and lace evening wrap. An embroidered nightgown of the 1860's has been received from Miss Florence Willson of Minneapolis. A collection of infant's clothing has been presented by Mrs. Arthur Katz of St. Paul; and a quilt for an infant's bed, made by Mrs. Nancy Galbraith Irvine, is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Cushing F. Wright of St. Paul. Miss Alice Forepaugh of St. Paul has given several items from the estate of Mrs. H. Sahlgaard, including a pair of high women's shoes and a stereoscope with views.

Recent additions to the society's picture collection include 450 photographs, most of which are views of St. Paul and its vicinity about 1895, from Mr. A. Irber of St. Paul; six photographs of Fort Snelling in 1903, from Mr. Abram K. Sleeper of St. Paul; two pictures of Red River carts in 1858, presented by Mr. Thomas W. Andrew of Philadelphia, through the courtesy of Miss Cleora Wheeler of St. Paul; and a small photograph of a similar cart, from Mr. Drake Lightner of St. Paul.

"The 1st of January, 1857, found me at the little village of Winona, Minnesota, where I taught a class of students during the balance of the winter," writes Major Robert M. McDowell in a personal memoir quoted in *The Lowmans in Chemung County*. This genealogy, compiled by Seymour Lowman (Elmira, New York, 1938. 237 p.), has recently been acquired by the society. Major McDowell, a civil engineer, helped to survey and locate a land grant railroad from Winona to the Big Sioux River. Experiences with Indians and

a dangerous encounter with wolves on a trip to St. Paul are described in the memoir. Minnesotans are represented in a number of other recent additions to the genealogical collection. Sketches of several members of the Dodd family in Minnesota, including William B. Dodd, who built the Dodd Road and lost his life in the defense of New Ulm in 1862, appear in a *Genealogy and History of the Daniel Dod Family in America, 1646-1940* by Allison Dodd and Joseph F. Folsom (Bloomfield, New Jersey, 1940. 425 p.). Minnesota lawyers, physicians, and portrait painters appear in Mortimer E. Cooley's *Cooley Genealogy* (Rutland, Vermont, 1941. 1199 p.), which includes a biographical sketch of Jerome E. Cooley of Duluth. A former St. Paul journalist and real-estate dealer, James A. Nowell, is the subject of a sketch appearing in a volume on the *Nowell and Allied Families* (New York, 1941. 229 p.).

Other genealogies recently added to the society's extensive collection of such works include: Purl M. Agee, *A Record of the Agee Family* (Independence, Missouri, 1937. 330 p.); Regis Roy, *La Famille d'Ailleboust* (Montreal, Canada. 11 p.); Lydia M. Austin, *A History of Rev. William Austin and His Wife, Elizabeth, with the Names and Addresses of Their Living Descendants*, vol. 1 (New York, 1940. 40 p.); George E. Baldwin, *The Descendants of Deacon Aaron Baldwin of North Branford, Conn. 1724-1800* (Forestville, New York, 1907. 102 p.); Mrs. Margaret P. Brown, *Brown-Lafferty-Drysdale-Chamberlain Ancestry* (Peoria, 1936. 71 p.); Blanche B. Bryant, *The Progenitors and Descendants of Thomas Page Brown and Sarah (Sally) Parker* (Springfield, Vermont, 1938. 137 p.); Kendrick Grobel, *David Arms Brown and Cleora Augusta Towne, and Their Ancestry and Descendants* (Stafford Springs, Connecticut, 1940. 40 p.); Harriet M. Grover, *Highlights of the Folger Family, with a Brief Genealogy* (Berkeley, California, 1939. 73 p.); Winslow H. Foster, *The Ancestry of Winslow Howard Foster and That of His Wife Anna Mabel (Burr) Foster of Ludington, Michigan* (Ludington, 1941. 71 p.); Jesse D. Fry, *Embracing a Sketch of the Fry and Pinch Families* (Columbiaville, Michigan. 23 p.); John B. Nichols, *Edward Garfield (1575-1672) of Watertown, Mass.* (Washington, 1939. 8 p.); Willard H. Gildersleeve, *Gildersleeve Pioneers* (Rutland, Vermont, 1941. 337 p.); Mrs. Margaret P. Brown, *Harker-Higley Ancestry*, part 2 (Peoria, Illinois, 1931. 112 p.); Ralph C. Hawkins, *A Hawkins Genealogy 1635-1939*.

*Record of the Descendants of Robert Hawkins of Charlestown, Massachusetts* (Richmond Hill, New York, 1939. 316 p.); Mable Ann Hinkhouse, *The Name, Family, & Pedigree of "Hinghaus," with Brief History* (Takoma Park, Maryland, 1940. 28 p.); Edward Johnson, *Family History, Centered around Peter Johnson and Catherine (Hunter) Johnson* (Valier, Pennsylvania, 1940. 27 p.); Alta K. Christophel, *Ascending and Descending Genealogy of the Children of Joseph Kurtz and Lydia Zook* (Mishawaka, Indiana, 1940. 20 p.); Charles Leese, *The Lawrence Leese Family History; Two Centuries in America (1741-1941)* (Frankfort, Kentucky, 1941. 214 p.); Fred W. Cheney, *The Littles and Youngmans of Peterborough, New Hampshire, and Their Descendants* (Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1940. 23 p.); Anne M. McClees, *Alexander Low and His Descendants in America* (Freehold, New Jersey, 1940. 8 p.); G. W. Mason, *Ancestors and Descendants of Elisha Mason and His Wife, Lucretia Webster* (Litchfield, Connecticut, 1911. 116 p.); Samuel E. Massengill, *Records on the Henry Massengill Memorial and Directory near Johnson City, Tennessee* (Bristol, Tennessee, 1940. 10 p.); Lula P. O'Conner, *The O'Conner-Conner-Simmons Families* (Southern Pines, North Carolina, 1941. 81 p.); Mrs. Margaret P. Brown, *A Genealogy List for Peter Pfeiffer (Pifer), George Pfeiffer, Anna Barbara (Pfeiffer) Bietsch (Beach) Margaretha Anna (Pfeiffer) Nicklas* (Peoria, Illinois, 1934. 23 p.); John J. Porter, *The Ancestors of Jermain and Louise Porter* (Hagerstown, Maryland, 1940. 2 vols.); William P. Powell, *Some Descendants of the Connecticut and Massachusetts Branch of the Powell Family* (Springfield, Massachusetts, 1931. 16 p.); Margaret M. Strong Hale, *Genealogy of the Ragland Families and Numerous Other Families in America with Whom They Have Intermarried* (St. Louis, 1928. 121 p.); Mary E. Colby, *The Richardson Family, Pioneers of Oregon and Utah* (Dallas, Oregon, 1940. 39 p.); Hopewell L. Rogers, *Rogers; Some of the Descendants of Giles Rogers, An Immigrant to Virginia in 1664* (Louisville, Kentucky, 1940. 114 p.); Edward R. Sandiford, *Some More Descendants of John and Elinor Whitney* (Bloomfield, New Jersey, 1941. 8 p.); and John R. Wilbor and Benjamin F. Wilbour, *The Wildbores in America; A Family Tree*, vol. 4 (Baltimore, Maryland, 1940. 298 p.).

Among general compilations of value to the genealogist recently received are an *Index to the Lineage Books of Daughters of Founders*

and Patriots (Denver, 1941. 63 p.); *Family Bible Records* collected by Elizabeth Hayward (Ridgewood, New Jersey, 1941. 29 p.); and volume 2 of *Pioneer Families of the Midwest* by Blanche L. Walden (Atkins, Ohio, 1941. 127 p.).

Among local histories acquired during the second quarter of 1941 are: Edward W. Cooch, *The Battle of Cooch's Bridge Delaware, September 3, 1777* (Cooch's Bridge, Delaware, 1940. 120 p.); Annie W. Burns, *Maryland Genealogies and Historical Recorder*, vol. 1 (Washington, 1941. 113 p.); Samuel Mason, *Historical Sketches of Harford County, Maryland* (Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1940. 119 p.); *Wenham Town Records, 1730-1775* (Wenham, Massachusetts, 1940. 292 p.); Joseph C. Hagar, *Marshfield, The Autobiography of a Pilgrim Town* (Marshfield, Massachusetts, 1940. 334 p.); H. Stanley Craig, *Salem County Wills Recorded in the Office of the Surrogate at Salem, N. J., 1804-1830; 1831-1860* (Merchantville, New Jersey. 2 vols.); Mrs. Sterling B. Jordan, *Tombstone Records of Eighteen Cemeteries in Poundridge, Westchester County, N. Y.* (White Plains, New York, 1941. 52 p.); Robert O. DeMond, *The Loyalists in North Carolina during the Revolution* (Durham, North Carolina, 1940. 286 p.); Clarence W. Griffin, *Western North Carolina Sketches* (Forest City, North Carolina, 1941. 96 p.); Thomas F. Hickerson, *Happy Valley, History and Genealogy* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1940. 244 p.); Ophia D. Smith, *Old Oxford Houses and the People Who Lived in Them* (Oxford, Ohio, 1941. 149 p.); E. A. Weston, *A History of Brooklyn, Susquehanna Co., Pa.: Its Homes and Its People* (Brooklyn, Pennsylvania, 1889. 282 p.); Katharine T. Obear, *Through the Years in Old Winnsboro* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1940. 258 p.); Birney C. Batcheller, *People of Wallingford* (Brattleboro, Vermont, 1937. 328 p.); Warren E. Booker, *Historical Notes, Jamaica, Windham County, Vermont* (Brattleboro, Vermont, 1940. 244 p.); Eliza T. Davis, *Frederick County, Virginia, Marriages, 1771-1825* (1941. 129 p.); Augusta B. Fothergill, *Virginia Tax Payers, 1782-87, Other Than Those Published by the United States Census Bureau* (1940. 142 p.); and Nettie B. Cooper, *History of Prospect Valley Dedicated to the Memory of the Families of John and Phoebe (Conaway) Chalfant Melville and Christena (Chalfant) Bartlett* (Fairmont, West Virginia, 1940. 170 p.).

L. M. F.

## NEWS AND COMMENT

"PROBLEMS and Opportunities in the Field of Business History" are discussed by Ralph M. Hower in the *Bulletin* of the Business Historical Society for April. Professor Hower describes some of the "specific jobs to be done in the field," such as the preparation of histories of individual firms, the study of the development of an entire industry, and the tracing of the evolution of marketing, accounting, and retailing. He also presents some of the problems connected with source materials for business history and their preservation, and mentions the "restricted means of publication" for articles on the subject. An organ for the publication of such articles has been provided recently in the *Journal of Economic History*, the first issue of which appeared in May. Included in the number are articles on "Land Policy and Tenancy in the Prairie States" by Paul W. Gates, and on Terence Vincent Powderly, the leader of the Knights of Labor from 1879 to 1893, by Harry J. Carman.

A series of eight bulletins on *The Challenge to Democracy* has been issued under the direction of the extension service and the experiment station of the Iowa State College at Ames. Included are *Democracy on Trial* by John A. Vieg, *The Citizen and the Power to Govern* by John H. Powell, *The Family Farm in the Machine Age* by Louis Bernard Schmidt, *The Test of Citizenship* by V. Alton Moody, *Democracy and Nationalism* by Clarence H. Matterson, *Toward a New Rural Statesmanship* by Earle D. Ross, *Toward a Better Public Administration* by H. C. Cook, and *The Machine and Democracy* by Charles H. Norby. All the authors are members of the history and government staff in the Iowa State College. Copies of the bulletins may be obtained from the college.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park was formally dedicated by President Roosevelt on June 30. His dedicatory remarks were preceded by short addresses by Dr. R. D. W. Connor, archivist of the United States, and Dr. Samuel E. Morison, professor of history in Harvard University. The museum portions of the library were opened to the public after the dedication exercises, and within three



weeks over six thousand visitors had viewed the exhibits. An admission fee of twenty-five cents is charged by the museum. There will be no charge for the use of the library, which has not yet been opened.

"For twenty-five years Henry de Tonty was the most dominant figure in the Mississippi Valley," writes Edmund R. Murphy in his recent biography of *Henry de Tonty, Fur Trader of the Mississippi* (Baltimore, 1941. 129 p.). His travels and his fur-trading excursions in the period from 1678 to 1704 "extended from the far north, near Hudson's Bay to eastern Texas. He touched most of the states now watered by the Mississippi and the Lakes, with the possible exception of Iowa and Minnesota." That this French trader of the Illinois country had some influence in the Minnesota country, however, is evident from Mr. Murphy's statement that Tonty "revealed the economic importance of the Mississippi Basin, pointed out the English menace, and revived the flagging interest of the French court in the Louisiana country." The writer contends that Tonty should be "accorded the place, independent from that of La Salle, which he deserves."

Two long and detailed sections of a "critical essay" by Jean Delanglez on "Hennepin's *Description of Louisiana*" have been published in *Mid-America* for January and April. With the later installment appears an announcement that these and additional sections will be published in book form in the near future. When Father Delanglez' volume appears, it will be reviewed in *Minnesota History*.

A brief sketch of "Daniel Greysolon du Lhut, Coureur de Bois" is contributed to the June issue of the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* by Isura Andrus-Juneau. Emphasis is given to the explorer's ascent of the Bois Brule River in 1680 and his subsequent descent of the St. Croix.

The presidential address presented by Professor Carl Wittke before the Mississippi Valley Historical Association meeting in Milwaukee on April 25 appears in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* for June. He deals with "The America Theme in Continental European Literatures," and suggests that students of immigration will find some profitable sources in the prose and poetry of the French, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the Italians, the Czechs, and other Europeans. The writer notes that "Professors Stephenson and Blegen have thrown much light upon the America theme in Scandinavian literature," and

he quotes from "Blegen and Ruud's excellent collection of Norwegian songs . . . written by Norwegian poets as a reaction to emigration." "Literature of this kind," writes Dr. Wittke, "has value for the historian. Whatever the original purpose for which it was written, it serves to inform posterity of the life and customs of its day." The study of immigration literature, "on the vague border line of the history of literature and the history of culture," the writer concludes, is one on which "the students of history and the students of literature may profitably combine their research techniques for a better and more complete understanding" of American immigration.

An essay on "Edward Eggleston: Pioneer in Social History" by Charles Hirschfeld is included in a volume entitled *Historiography and Urbanization: Essays in American History in Honor of W. Stull Holt*, edited by Eric F. Goldman (Baltimore, 1941). "In the external circumstances of Eggleston's life are to be found some of the elements that formed the matrix of his conception of history," writes Mr. Hirschfeld. Among them the writer mentions Eggleston's experience as a Methodist minister on the Minnesota frontier.

The origin of a movement that has become an important factor in Minnesota's agricultural life is explained by A. B. Graham in an article on "Boys' and Girls' Agricultural Clubs," which appears in the April issue of *Agricultural History*. Mr. Graham recalls that in 1902 the boys and girls of his school in Springfield Township, Ohio, organized a garden club. Within a year they were discussing the "benefits to be derived from education through the three H's, — the Head, the Heart, and the Hand." Clubs of a similar nature were organized in the early 1900's in Illinois and Iowa. "The fourth H was an afterthought," writes Mr. Graham, "added in 1910, and usually attributed to O. B. Martin of South Carolina."

*A Guide to Manuscript Depositories in New York City* has been prepared and published by the Historical Records Survey of the WPA (1941. 149 p.). The manuscript resources of no fewer than sixty institutions and public depositories are covered in this *Guide*. In addition, the archives and manuscript holdings of a number of commercial concerns are listed. The forthcoming publication of a "Guide to Ten Major Depositories of Manuscript Collections in New York State (Exclusive of New York City)," which has been compiled by the His-

torical Records Survey and edited by Harry B. Yoshpe, has been announced. This volume, which will be published by the Middle States Association of History and Social Science Teachers, will present a detailed description of the holdings of the "New York State Library at Albany, and nine other important institutions distributed geographically from the Hudson and Champlain valleys in the east to Buffalo in the west."

An all-day conference on local history was held under the auspices of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives at Des Moines on May 9. More than a hundred people attended and twenty-eight Iowa counties were represented. "The conference was planned to coordinate, to assist, and to stimulate the work of societies already organized and likewise to assist those interested individuals in communities where no local town or county organization exists." Among the speakers were Dr. John E. Briggs of the State Historical Society of Iowa, who offered some "Suggestions for New Organizations," and Mr. Kenneth E. Colton, who outlined the "steps to follow in organizing a historical society in a community where none had previously existed."

"As a boy, I had to learn to do everything that could and should be done in home-building — sowing and reaping, feeding and breeding, branding and butchering, breaking horses and opening markets, planting trees and grafting them, knitting and candle dipping, music and handicrafts in family, social, educational, and religious life, all calling for initiative, forethought, ingenuity, and economy." Thus writes Carl E. Seashore in an article on "Pioneering in Iowa," which appears in the June number of the *Palimpsest* as a preprint from a forthcoming volume entitled "Pioneering in Psychology." The author is a son of a Swedish pioneer who settled on the Iowa prairies in 1869.

An article on the "Early History of Hesper," Iowa, published last year by Burr F. Griswold in the *Mabel Record* (see *ante*, 21:204), has been expanded by the author into a longer narrative that appears in the *Record* from April 18 to June 20. The author devotes ten lengthy installments to the story of "Pioneer Days in Hesper Township," which was originally settled in 1851. Sketches of a large number of pioneers of this community, which is near the Minnesota boundary, have been added to the narrative.

The "Reminiscences of a Northern Wisconsin Doctor," Dr. Loran W. Beebe of Superior, are published in the *Wisconsin Medical Journal* for February as one of a series of articles commemorating the centennial of the State Medical Society of Wisconsin. Dr. Beebe describes the organization of the Douglas County Medical Society in 1889, he recalls epidemics and health conditions at the Head of the Lakes, and he tells of early hospitals in Superior. The first antitoxin that he used, the writer recalls, was obtained from a physician in Duluth who had a supply.

The *Messages of the Governors of the Territory of Washington to the Legislative Assembly, 1854-1889* have been edited by a former member of the staff of the Minnesota Historical Society, Dr. Charles M. Gates, as volume 12 of the University of Washington's *Publications in the Social Sciences* (Seattle, 1941. 298 p.). Though the material now made available by Dr. Gates is of primary importance to historians of the Pacific Northwest, there is much to engage the attention of those interested in Minnesota. The people of both regions were concerned with similar problems — the extinguishment of Indian title and the settlement of the Indians on reservations, the survey and settlement of the public lands acquired from the Indians, the attraction of immigrants, the development of agriculture and commerce, and the improvement of transportation. The first territorial governor of Washington was Isaac I. Stevens, who resigned from the army in March, 1853, to accept the appointment and to conduct the Pacific Railroad survey westward from St. Paul. Stevens' interest in a northern transcontinental railroad is reflected in his messages as territorial governor. "The question of a Pacific Railroad is not simply one of domestic intercommunication and of strengthening the fraternal bonds which unite us as a people," he stated in his last message to the legislature on December 3, 1856, "it is the question of a struggle for the commerce of the world." The same opinion was later expressed by James J. Hill.

L. B.

Hudson, Wisconsin, before and after the destructive fire of May 19, 1866, is described by Willis H. Miller in an article that calls attention to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the catastrophe in the *Hudson Star-Observer* for May 22. The author presents an excellent picture of social life in the frontier community of the 1860's.

The St. Croix Valley Historical Society of Wisconsin was organized at Hudson early in May. The organization proposes to preserve "manuscripts, pioneer implements, costumes, books, maps, papers, letters, programs, legends, biographical data, pictures," and to study the history and development of the valley that marks the boundary between Wisconsin and Minnesota.

The Earl of Selkirk's attempt to recruit Irish settlers for his colony on the Red River to assist in its defense against the "North West bullies" is discussed in "Five 'Selkirk' Letters," hitherto unpublished, which have been edited by John Perry Pritchett and Murray Horowitz for publication in the June issue of the *Canadian Historical Review*. All the letters are to or by William J. Macdonnell, one of the two brothers of Miles Macdonnell through whom Selkirk hoped to negotiate with the Irish. They are dated from 1815 to 1818.

A local industry that is of importance in parts of Minnesota as well as in Canada is the subject of an article by Margaret A. MacLeod on "Making Maple Sugar in Manitoba," which appears in the *Winnipeg Free Press* for April 19. Mrs. MacLeod cites examples of the making of maple sugar in the Red River country as early as 1800, drawing upon the journal of Alexander Henry, the younger, for her information. "Red Lake (now in Minnesota) was a great source of sugar," she writes. "One year Henry told of 20 Indian canoes arriving at his post and of buying ten kegs of sugar. He operated a sugar camp near there himself, one year, and brought back to his post 1,600 pounds of sugar, while 300 pounds had been consumed at the camp. He brought back also 36 gallons of syrup."

#### GENERAL MINNESOTA ITEMS

One of the most useful publications to be issued by the Minnesota Historical Records Survey is its recent *Guide to Public Vital Statistics Records in Minnesota* (1941. 142 p.). This volume makes available a "brief check list of existing State and local public records of births, marriages, deaths, and divorces, with transcripts, abstracts, or citations of legislation requiring or affecting the keeping of records of each of these types." In view of the increasing demand for records of birth, marital status, and the like, this convenient list of the records to be found in each county, township, and municipality of Min-

nesota should be widely used. The Historical Records Survey has issued four more volumes of the *Inventory of the County Archives of Minnesota*. In them are listed the records of Hubbard County at Park Rapids (no. 29—157 p.), of Kanabec County at Mora (no. 33—130 p.), of Lincoln County at Ivanhoe (no. 41—119 p.), and of Murray County at Slayton (no. 51—143 p.).

The Minnesota State-wide Archaeological and Historical Research Survey has been inaugurated as a WPA project under the sponsorship of the Minnesota Historical Society, the department of anthropology in the University of Minnesota, the division of state parks, and the state highway department. The new project will be supervised by Mr. Richard R. Sackett of St. Paul, formerly assistant state supervisor of the Minnesota Historical Records Survey. The main object of the new project is a resurvey in the field of the materials collected from 1881 to 1895 by Alfred J. Hill and Theodore H. Lewis. The survey also will make studies of historic sites in the state, and will prepare for publication guides to historic sites and markers.

A popular survey of the "Pre-history of Minnesota" is contributed by Edward W. Schmidt to the June issue of *Our Minnesota*. Both geology and archaeology are considered by the writer, who also devotes considerable space to the Indian tribes found by the early explorers of the region, such as Hennepin and Perrot. In the same issue George Laing describes the "One Million Acres" in the "roadless area" of northeastern Minnesota. "This is the heart of North America, of the New World," he writes. He designates Minnesota as the "peak of the continent," whence "spring rivers that flow to the Arctic, to the Atlantic, to the Gulf of Mexico." The story of the Hardware Mutual Insurance Company of Minnesota, which was established in May, 1899, and is said to have been the first company of its kind, is reviewed by Fletcher Wilson in *Our Minnesota* for May.

Seventeen paintings and lithographs from the Minnesota Historical Society's picture collection were included in an exhibit entitled "The Twin Cities in Early Pictures" which opened at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts on July 7 and was continued throughout July and August. Other pictures in the display, which consisted of thirty items dating from 1842 to 1903, were loaned by the Minneapolis Club, the Minneapolis Public Library, and private collectors. Among the pic-

tures displayed were views of the Falls of St. Anthony, of Minnehaha Falls, of St. Paul and Minneapolis at various stages in their development, of Fort Snelling, and of Mendota. The artists represented included Captain Seth Eastman, who served as commandant at Fort Snelling during the decade of the 1840's; Colonel Alfred Sully, who commanded a Minnesota regiment in the Civil War and led expeditions against the hostile Sioux after the outbreak of 1862; Henry Lewis, who visited Minnesota in 1848 while gathering sketches for a great panorama of the upper Mississippi; J. D. Larpeur, a French relative of a well-known St. Paul family; Edwin Whitefield, who employed his art to promote the sale of lots in Minnesota townsites; Peter Q. Clausen, a Danish artist who settled in Minneapolis in the 1860's; and Robert Koehler, a former director of the Minneapolis School of Art. In connection with the exhibit, the institute also displayed six water colors by Sully of western forts outside the Twin Cities area, including one of Fort Ridgely in 1855; and thirty-one colored lithographs of Indian scenes by George Catlin, the artist who discovered the Pipestone Quarry in western Minnesota in 1836.

After some searching through the more than six hundred pages in Alexander P. Anderson's *Seventh Reader* (Caldwell, Idaho, The Caxton Printers, 1941), one discovers that the author was born in the 1860's and lived as a youth "within half a mile of the old stagecoach trail that ran from La Crosse along the river to Red Wing, then through valleys and over prairies towards Cannon Falls, Northfield, and Fari-bault." This information and chapter titles such as "The Pioneers," "Two Goodhue County, Minnesota, Tornadoes," "The Last of the Dugouts," "The Big Woods," and "On the Banks of the Cannon" arouse expectations of finding in this substantial volume some first-rate material on pioneer life in Goodhue County. Unfortunately, however, the references to frontier conditions and characters are vague and widely distributed, and have but slight value for the local historian. Mention should be made of several charming illustrations in color, showing scenes in Goodhue County and views on the Mississippi and Cannon rivers.

The Reverend Hilarion Duerk of Union Hill presents the first of a series of articles under the title "Historical Notes and Occurrences of Southern Minnesota" in the *New Prague Times* for April 3 and the

*Le Center Leader* for April 17. The opening installments deal with the Chippewa and the Sioux, their habits and customs, their rivalry and warfare, and the practices of the medicine men. Long quotations from letters and diaries of 1845, 1854, and 1861 are presented, but neither the authors nor the localities are given. In the *Leader* the installment for June 5 is devoted to an account of "Pioneer Life" in the Union Hill settlement, and that for June 26 deals with steamboating on the Mississippi. At times the author localizes his narrative in Le Sueur and Scott counties, but he wanders as far afield as Lake Itasca.

A survey of "Homeopathic and Eclectic Medicine in Minnesota," by James Eckman of the division of publications of the Mayo Clinic, appears in the June issue of *Minnesota Medicine* as a chapter in the "History of Medicine in Minnesota" which has been appearing in that magazine for several years. "In many pioneer communities in the early years of the state the only physicians available were homeopaths," writes Mr. Eckman, who describes the organization of the Minnesota State Homeopathic Institute in 1867. Dr. George B. Weiser's "History of Medicine in Brown County," which constitutes another chapter in the medical history of the state, is concluded in three installments appearing in the April, May, and June numbers of *Minnesota Medicine*. It consists merely of brief biographical statements about physicians who practiced in the county.

The meeting of the National Eucharistic Congress in the Twin Cities from June 23 to 26 focussed attention on Minnesota's Catholic backgrounds and occasioned numerous newspaper articles in this field. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, for example, published in its Sunday issues a series of feature articles dealing with leaders of the church in the Northwest. It opens with a sketch of Archbishop Ireland by Winifred Netherly, in the issue for May 18. This is followed by an account of Father Galtier and his chapel by Marjorie Knowles, June 1; a sketch of Bishop Grace by Isabel Gibson, June 8; a review of the career of Bishop Cretin by Mary Clendenin, June 15; and a sketch of Father Ravoux by Miss Knowles, June 22. The latter issue includes also an account, by Miss Netherly, of the arrival in St. Paul of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and of the schools and other institutions that they established in the frontier community.



Meetings at Stillwater of the Central Verein, a German Catholic organization, and of the Catholic Aid Association are recalled in the *Social Justice Review* for February. The two organizations held joint conventions in the Minnesota city in 1898 and again in 1910, according to this account.

Only a brief mention of the Mennonite settlements in Minnesota is made by John C. Wenger in his *Glimpses of Mennonite History* (Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1940). The author gives some attention to the Russian Mennonite migration of the 1870's, which resulted in a number of Middle Western settlements, and he describes the development of a local church conference.

"Like Father, Like Son" is the title of a sketch, by Walter Eli Quigley, of Senator Charles A. Lindbergh and his famous son appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post* for June 21. The writer describes Colonel Lindbergh as the "third in a line of dissenters." He tells of Ola Mansson, a member of the Swedish Riksdag, who emigrated with his wife and infant son in 1860 and settled near Melrose, where Charles A. Lindbergh, Sr., spent his boyhood. An account of the latter's career as a Minnesota lawyer and political leader, and particularly of his connection with the Nonpartisan League, makes up the bulk of the article.

Dr. Hildegard Binder-Johnson is the author of a study of the "Distribution of the German Pioneer Population in Minnesota" which appears in the March issue of *Rural Sociology*. "To determine the proportion of German stock in the total population in Minnesota" in 1860 and 1870 was the author's purpose in making this study, which is based upon manuscript census schedules in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society. The number of Germans from Europe and the children of Germans were determined for each township in the state. The percentages of German stock for 1860 and 1870 are illustrated on maps, where they are shown in six different shadings. They indicate that the German population centers for both years were in the area about the great bend of the Minnesota River, in Carver, Sibley, Nicollet, and Brown counties.

Many phases of frontier life are touched upon by Dr. Hiram A. Haskell in a little booklet containing a "reminiscence" of his father,

*Joseph Haskell of Afton* (1941. 21 p.). The writer describes his subject as the "man who broke soil in 1839 for the first farm in what is now Minnesota," an indication that students of agricultural history will find the narrative of more than ordinary interest and value. The elder Haskell, a native of Maine, went to Indiana in 1838. After an attack of malaria he again moved westward, going first to St. Louis and then to Fort Snelling. From the fort he went by boat to St. Croix Falls, and in the St. Croix Valley he selected near the site of Afton the claim upon which he thereafter made his home. "Here, in the fall of 1839, assisted by Mr. Sullivan Norris who was with him, he broke several acres of land." Dr. Haskell recalls the buildings erected on the farm thus established, and he tells of the well a hundred feet deep "which supplied the needs of the household and, in part, of the stock." The cultural and social interests of the family are mentioned. The publications read regularly in this frontier home included the *New York Tribune*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Boston Journal of Commerce*, and the *American Agriculturist*. Among the author's early memories is that of several neighbors who went "from house to house on Christmas morning singing the lovely English carols." As a member of the legislature from 1869 to 1871, Haskell was particularly active in promoting the state's program of education. In addition to a sketch of his father, Dr. Haskell includes in this pamphlet his mother's recollections of "Early Days in Minnesota," a letter written from Pembina by Charles Cavileer in 1890, and some genealogical data.

Minneapolis and St. Paul are featured in issues of the *Christian Science Monitor* for April 7 and May 12, respectively. The communities of the present, their industrial, educational, and recreational advantages, are described, with several pages of each issue devoted to articles about these Minnesota cities. In connection with its discussion of Minneapolis, the Boston newspaper presents articles on the University of Minnesota, the public library and its work, and the flour mills; in discussing St. Paul, it gives special attention to the work of the International Institute, to the university's college of agriculture and the University Farm, and to the Women's Institute.

In the summer number of *Common Ground*, Louis Adamic describes the St. Paul Festival of Nations as a folk festival which dramatizes "to the community the contributions and potentialities of its

various elements" and gives to "people of different backgrounds an opportunity to mingle and work together." Mr. Adamic gives a detailed account of the festival staged by the International Institute of St. Paul in 1939, when he himself was present. The festivals arranged in the Minnesota city in the past decade, he writes, carry an "important and urgent suggestion to the United States as a whole," and that planned for the spring of 1942 "should get national attention."

Eight Minnesota paper mills are listed in a volume which surveys *250 Years of Papermaking in America* (New York, 1940). Only one of the Minnesota firms, the Waldorf Paper Products Company of St. Paul, is the subject of a special historical sketch. A picture of the Northwest Paper Company's mill at Cloquet, however, is included.

As the first of a series of articles on "Conservation Pioneers of Minnesota," Evadene B. Swanson contributes to the June issue of the *Conservation Volunteer* a sketch of Sam F. Fullerton, "Agent to the First Game Commission" established in the state. Fullerton's work as a game conservationist from 1895 to 1911 is described. In the same number, G. N. Rysgaard presents a "Short History of Waterfowl" in Minnesota, citing accounts of explorers who remarked upon the abundance of wild ducks on the frontier lakes and streams. E. V. Willard tells of the organization of the Minnesota state geographic board and discusses some of the problems that it must solve in an article entitled "Our Lakes — What's in a Name?"

Minnesota state parks, recreational reserves, state waysides, state monuments, and state forests are located on a pictorial map recently issued by the divisions of state parks and forestry of the Minnesota department of conservation.

The St. Croix River, "which today means so much to fishermen, played an historic part in the opening of the Northwest," writes Joe MacGaheeran in "A Tribute to the St. Croix," which appears in the June issue of *Golfer and Sportsman*. He tells something of explorers, voyageurs, lumbermen, and early settlers, but his emphasis is upon the sportsmen who have found a fishermen's haven in this stream for half a century.

The stories of the Falls of St. Anthony, of Red Rock, of Hiawatha and Minnehaha, of Winona and Maiden Rock, and of White Bear

Lake are retold by Mrs. Carl T. Thayer in a booklet of *Indian Legends of Minnesota* (16 p.). It is illustrated with pictures furnished by the Minnesota Historical Society.

A Minnesota family — "The Nels Handevichts of Martin County" — is the subject of one of the sixteen family sketches in a volume by J. C. Furnas entitled *How America Lives* (New York, 1941). Economic and social life on a southern Minnesota farm are here described as typified in a family of Danish and German descent.

#### LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

About forty-five members of the Anoka County Historical Society attended its annual picnic, which was held at St. Francis on June 14. The program included papers on the history of Anoka County by Mrs. Fannie Lenfest and on the early years of St. Francis by Mrs. L. J. Greenwald. The society accepted an offer, made by Mrs. Inez K. Lowe, of the use of a room in her home for the arrangement and preservation of books and museum objects acquired by the society.

One of the special summer exhibits arranged in the museum of the Blue Earth County Historical Society at Mankato consists of dolls and toys of long ago. A music box that was presented to a little girl seventy years ago and a group of tops are included among the toys. During May, eleven classes with their teachers from various parts of Blue Earth County visited the society's museum.

More than two hundred people attended the annual dinner meeting of the Brown County Historical Society in New Ulm on May 1. A feature of the program was a talk by Mr. T. O. Streissguth, county attorney of Brown County, who reviewed the history of the local district court and of the county attorney's office. The development of the milling industry in Brown County was the subject of a paper presented by Mr. A. F. Anglemyer. Mr. Fred W. Johnson, president of the society, conducted a historical quiz among members of the audience.

The accomplishments during its first year of the Carver County Historical Society are surveyed in several newspapers of the locality for the last week in April. Included are the *Weekly Valley Herald* of Chaska for April 24, the *Norwood Times* for April 25, and the *Young America Eagle* for April 25. These papers reveal that under

the direction of Mr. O. D. Sell, curator, the society has established a museum at Mayer, and has collected and placed on display some twelve hundred items of local historical interest. The displays have been viewed by nearly two thousand visitors who registered.

A joint meeting of the Chippewa County Historical Society and the Watson Community Club was held at Watson on May 20. Mrs. L. N. Pierce, who was in charge of the program, reviewed the history of the historical society, Miss Edwina Gould outlined the history of the Lac qui Parle mission, and Mr. Harold Lathrop told of the recent restoration of the mission site.

The history of transportation in Minnesota was the subject of an address presented by Dr. Arthur J. Larsen, superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society, at a meeting of the Cook County Historical Society at Grand Portage on June 7. The meeting was held in the new museum building within the Grand Portage stockade. Many interesting displays had been arranged in cases and labeled for the occasion.

A tour of the country about Long Lake and Orono and a dinner and program at the Burwell School in Minnetonka Mills were the features of a meeting of the Hennepin County Historical Society on June 21. Following the dinner, Mr. Dana Frear, vice-president of the society, led a discussion on the early history of Minnetonka Mills. Temporary markers were placed on sites of historic interest in the community for the benefit of the visitors. A brief "Historical Sketch" of the society and its museum at St. Louis Park has been issued in multi-graphed form.

The Kandiyohi County Historical Society held its first annual meeting at Willmar on June 17. "The history of our county is a stone in the great structure of national history," said Mayor Martin Leaf of Willmar in addressing the meeting. "Every man and woman who helped to develop our county," he continued, "deserves to be remembered." The speaker pointed out that the new society is in touch with more than sixty other county historical societies as well as with the state society.

About sixty people attended a meeting of the McLeod County Historical Society at Brownton on May 23. A paper on the history of the

community, with items drawn from the diary of Captain A. L. Brown, was read by Miss Virginia Baker.

Senator Victor Lawson was the speaker at a meeting of the Meeker County Historical Society at Litchfield on April 7. He took as his subject the organization and activities of the Kandiyohi County Historical Society, with which he is closely associated. The townships of Kingston, Union Grove, and Litchfield have contributed twenty-five dollars each for the purchase of display cases to be used in the Meeker County society's museum.

Mrs. Bunn T. Willson of Rochester was elected president of the Olmsted County Historical Society at a meeting held at Rochester on June 24. She succeeds the late Burt W. Eaton, who had served as head of the society since its organization in 1926. As secretary of the society, Mrs. Willson took the lead in establishing and promoting the organization's excellent museum in the Rochester library building. Other officers named at the recent meeting include Mrs. Jay E. Benedict of Stewartville, vice-president; E. H. Schlitgus of Rochester, second vice-president; Miss Ella Graff of Rochester, secretary; and Lester J. Fiegel of Rochester, treasurer.

An elaborate program marked the annual summer meeting of the Otter Tail County Historical Society, which was held at Henning on June 29. Among the speakers were Mr. Ben Kimber of Girard, who recalled the activities of a baseball nine that made his home township famous in 1889 and succeeding years; Mr. A. P. Mootz, who reviewed the history of the Northern Pacific Railroad in the county; and Mr. E. T. Barnard, who recalled visits to Henning in 1885 and 1886. A monument erected as a memorial to the pioneers of Henning and commemorating the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad at that place in 1881 was dedicated by Judge Anton Thompson, president of the county historical society. A picture of the monument appears with a detailed account of the meeting in the *Fergus Falls Daily Journal* for June 30.

"The Local Historical Society and the Community" was the subject of an address presented by Dr. Arthur J. Larsen, superintendent of the state historical society, before the annual meeting of the Pipestone County Old Settlers Historical Society at Pipestone on June 14.

Mr. H. A. Petschow was elected president of the organization, Mrs. Carrie Ludolph was named secretary, and Mr. Charles W. Nuttle is the treasurer for the coming year.

The cultural heritage that residents of Rice County have received from the pioneer settlers of the 1850's was described by Dr. Arthur J. Larsen, superintendent of the Minnesota Historical Society, in an address on "The Roots of the Community" presented at the spring dinner meeting of the Rice County Historical Society in Northfield on May 20. About fifty people attended the meeting. Dr. Larsen was introduced by Mr. Carl L. Weicht, president of the local society, who also reported on the progress of an index of Rice County newspapers that is being made under WPA auspices. The text of Dr. Larsen's address appears in the *Northfield Independent* for August 7.

At the annual meeting of the Roseau County Historical Society, which was held at Roseau on June 16, the following officers were elected: Louis Enstrom, president; Martin Grafthen, vice-president; Jacob Snustad, secretary; and C. B. Dahlquist, treasurer. Plans were made for erecting a bronze marker on the site of the first Lutheran church in the county, which was established at Spruce fifty years ago.

No section of the United States has a "more interesting background than our own Iron Ore Capital," reads an editorial in the *Hibbing Daily Tribune* for April 4, which calls upon the people of the community to meet for the organization of a local historical society. The meeting, which was held on the evening of April 4, resulted in a permanent organization, the Hibbing Historical Society, affiliated with both the Minnesota and the St. Louis County societies. The following officers were elected: Clarence Kleffman, president; David Graham, vice-president; Hubert Dear, secretary; and L. C. Newcombe, treasurer.

Thirteen oil paintings of North Shore scenes, executed about fifty years ago by local artists, have been presented to the St. Louis County Historical Society by Mr. Hansen Evesmith of Fargo, North Dakota. The pictures were displayed during the summer months in the First and American National Bank of Duluth.

Quarters for the Sibley County Historical Society have been made available in the community building at Henderson, according to an

announcement in the *Henderson Independent* for May 9. Equipment is being provided by the city council and local clubs. An appeal for appropriate material to be displayed in the new museum appears in the *Independent* for June 13.

The museum of the Washington County Historical Society, which is in the old warden's residence at Stillwater (see *ante*, p. 219), was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies on June 20. The property was officially presented to the society by Senator Karl Neumeier, who represented Governor Stassen, and it was accepted by the society's president, Mr. E. L. Roney. The dedication address was presented by Dr. Arthur J. Larsen of the state historical society, who explained "What the Museum Means to the Community." The formal program was followed by a silver tea and a tour of the museum. About two hundred people were present. The exhibits were assembled and arranged by committees composed of members of the society, who found people throughout the county ready to co-operate with them. Not only were materials for display readily contributed, but show cases, trucking service, and skilled labor were freely provided by local business firms. Mr. and Mrs. George W. Buckley have been named caretakers of the museum property. A detailed description of the Washington County museum will appear in a future issue of this magazine.

"An area as old in years and as rich in history as that of which Winona is a part has a vast amount of things which should be perpetuated in a museum. Such a collection has been established at the Winona State Teachers college, through the cooperation of several interested organizations, and a variety of evidences of the past are being placed there for permanent keeping." Thus reads an editorial in the *Winona Republican-Herald* for June 21. It is pleasant to note that the Winona County Historical Society is among the organizations that are sponsoring the museum. Included also are the Winona State Teachers College and its alumni society, the Winona County Old Settlers Association, and the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Miss Mabel Marvin and Mrs. J. R. McConnon have arranged and labeled the exhibits. The *Republican-Herald* calls upon all who have material of local historical interest to turn it over to the museum, where "it will be kept on display as a lasting record of the development of life in this section of the United States."



## LOCAL HISTORY ITEMS

The Eksjo Evangelical Lutheran Church, near Lake Park in Becker County, is the subject of a historical sketch by its pastor, the Reverend R. W. Anderson, in the *Detroit Lakes Record* for June 26. It commemorates the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the congregation by a group of Swedish settlers in 1871.

"The first bill for poor relief in Brown county was allowed by the county supervisors" in March, 1860, according to an article in the *New Ulm Daily Journal* for April 5. Fourteen applications for relief from people who lost their means of support in the Sioux Outbreak of 1862 were found in the county commissioners' records for February, 1863. A list of the applicants and of the amount of relief granted to them appears in the *Journal*.

Members of the Cass Lake Junior Chamber of Commerce, at a meeting held on April 1, decided that the "most effective single means of attracting tourists and entertaining them would be in the establishing of an historical and Indian museum and an information bureau." The construction of a building for this project began late in April. When completed, it will house the large collections of Indian objects assembled by Mr. F. T. Gustavson.

Miss Edwina Gould relates the story of the organization of the George H. Thomas post of the Grand Army of the Republic at Montevideo in 1882 in the *Montevideo American* for April 11. She presents also an account of its activities in the 1880's, giving special attention to a district encampment held in 1887.

A brief history of the First National Bank of Windom, which marked its sixtieth anniversary in March, appears in the *Cottonwood County Citizen* of Windom for April 2. Some of the material for this account was gleaned from files of the *Citizen* preserved by the Minnesota Historical Society. The *Windom Reporter* for May 23 presents the first installment of a narrative by B. M. Eide, who describes his voyage as an immigrant boy from Norway to America in 1881 and his journey overland by rail to Windom. Additional sections of Mr. Eide's "Reminiscences of Early Days" appear in the *Reporter* for May 30 and June 6.

A wealth of "Crow Wing County Historical Data from 1857 to 1941" has been compiled by Anna Himrod and published in installments in the *Brainerd Tribune* from May 15 to July 17. The opening section deals with "Jurisdictions and Boundaries," enumerating the nations, states, and counties of which the present Crow Wing County has been a part, and presenting the story of its boundaries. This is followed by lists of county officials, May 22 and 29; of post offices that have existed in the county, June 5; of postmasters, June 12 and 19; of Congressional districts and Congressmen, June 26; and of legislative districts and legislators, July 10 and 17.

Attention is called to the value of telephone directories as historical sources, especially for the student of local history, in the *Brainerd Journal Press* for April 18. Bits of information gleaned from Brainerd directories of 1913, 1923, and 1926 are presented.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the *Dodge County Republican* of Kasson is the occasion for the publication in its issue for June 26 of a history of the paper. It reviews the story of the paper since its founding in 1867 by R. D. Hoag and U. B. Shaver. Advertisements in some of the early issues are described, since they "give one an insight of the community and of the times."

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the organization of Douglas County was marked by the presentation of a pageant at Alexandria on June 15. The text of the pageant, which reviews the history of the county and notes the organization of its townships, appears in the *Osakis Review* for June 19 and 26.

An interview with a pioneer teacher at Blue Earth, Miss Flavia Dean, appears in the *Blue Earth Post* for April 24. Miss Dean's name is first found in the records of the local school board for 1879, when the teaching staff consisted of a superintendent and three teachers; she continued to teach until 1909, when the faculty membership had increased to twenty-two.

The fiftieth anniversary of the *Alden Advance* is commemorated in its issue for April 3, which presents a brief history of the paper since the first copy came off the press on April 12, 1891. Attention is called also to a sheet issued by the Alden public schools in 1890, and the text of the first number is reprinted.

Various phases of the history of the Deephaven school are covered in a group of articles appearing in the *Deephaven Argus* from May 16 to June 6. Mrs. John A. Wilson, who provides an introduction, assembled the material for publication. Included are some recollections of the first school erected in the 1890's by a member of the original school board, a general account of the school's history by its present superintendent, a "History of Local Athletics" by A. M. Shuck, an account of the graduating class of 1905 by one of its members, a report on the first Girl Scout organization in the community, and some recollections of early Deephaven teachers by one of their pupils.

"The Last Frontier" is the title of a historical narrative by Bergit Anderson, the first installment of which appears in the *Itasca Progressive* for June 5. In it the author undertakes to present, in a form that is half fiction and half history, the story of the "settlement and growth of the Bigfork Valley." She deals especially with the settlers who established homes in this area of northern Minnesota in the period from 1893 to 1916, particularly before the lumber companies cleared the land of its virgin timber. In her introduction Miss Anderson notes that, like the early settlers who preserve their first log cabins and cut the "wild hay from the old logging roads," she is making an effort to "hang on to our backwoods ways, and keep them from being entirely wiped away." The first two installments deal with the settlement at Bigfork, where the first settlers were Damase Neveaux, a Frenchman, and Nels Felset, a Swede; the third tells of the early settlers in the Evergreen community.

Articles of local historical interest are often included in a column entitled "Up in This Neck of the Woods," which appears in the *Grand Rapids Herald-Review*. Pioneering experiences on a farm near Bigfork are recounted in the issue for April 2, which tells of the family of Robert Hensel, who settled there in 1902. The history of the Catholic church in Grand Rapids is reviewed on April 16. Beginning with the issue of April 23, the *Herald-Review* has published a chronology of events of importance in the history of Grand Rapids.

Mr. L. D. Lammon, editor of the *Itasca Iron News*, presents in the issue of his paper for April 3 a "Reminiscent Sketch of Pioneer Days of Canisteo Mining District" on the Mesabi Range. The reminiscences deal for the most part with the colorful personalities who made

mining history in the neighborhood of Coleraine and Bovey. There are recollections of such men as John C. Greenway, the first superintendent in the Canisteo district for the Oliver Iron Mining Company; of L. R. Salsich, who eventually became president of that company; and of scores of others.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Atwater Creamery Company was celebrated by the Kandiyohi County community with appropriate ceremonies on June 12. A feature of the program was a review of the history of the creamery by its officers. The story of the organization of this co-operative industry and of its progress during a half century is briefly outlined in the *Atwater Herald* for June 6.

In its issue for June 12, the *International Falls Press* inaugurates a series of articles entitled "Down the Years with Our Pioneers," in which sketches of early settlers in the border area will be presented. It opens with brief accounts of the careers of Nels L. Olson and of Otis H. Gordon. Some of the transportation problems that the border country pioneers encountered are described in the same issue of the *Press*. Steamboat and stagecoach lines that preceded the railroad are mentioned, and some attention is given to travel by dog team and canoe.

Some reminiscences of a pioneer settler on the North Shore of Lake Superior, John J. Hibbard, are published in the *Two Harbors Times* for June 12. The writer built and operated a sawmill at Burlington Bay in 1857, and two years later he built a mill for the Wieland brothers at Beaver Bay.

The methods used by L. F. Runions, a pioneer farmer near New York Mills, in building a lime kiln on his farm and in burning lime are recalled by his daughter, Mrs. Ida Lein of Rothsay, in the *Fergus Falls Daily Journal* for June 23. She describes the primitive kiln in which wood was burned, and she relates that it was necessary to "keep the fire going continually for six days and six nights" in order to reduce limestone to the "fine white, chalky substance" that was marketable as lime.

Near the original site of the Chapel of St. Paul, on what is now Kellogg Boulevard, a memorial to Father Lucian Galtier, who erected the chapel just a hundred years ago, was dedicated with appropriate ceremonies on June 11. About a hundred and fifty descendants of

St. Paul's pioneer settlers, army officers from Fort Snelling, and Catholic dignitaries witnessed the unveiling of the granite boulder with its inscriptions on bronze plaques. One of the plaques bears a portrait of Father Galtier; the other reproduces a picture of his chapel and quotes as follows from a statement by the pioneer priest: "In 1841 and in the month of October, I caused some logs to be cut, prepared and put up and soon after a poor church of logs and fitted so as to remind one of the stable of Bethlehem was built. Now the nucleus of St. Paul was formed. This church thus remained dedicated to Saint Paul and I expressed the wish to call the place by no other name." Among the speakers who participated in the dedication program were Dr. Ernest S. Powell of St. Paul, Mr. Willoughby M. Babcock, curator of the museum of the Minnesota Historical Society, and Archbishop Murray of St. Paul.

A periodical with a national circulation, the *Commonweal*, calls attention to the St. Paul centennial in an article by Louis N. Sarback entitled "St. Paul's First Century." It appears in the issue for June 6 and it bears the subtitle, "A miniature glance at a typical American city's history and complexion." The writer tells readers of this Catholic periodical that those attending the Eucharistic Congress in June "will find that the city of St. Paul, in celebrating its first 100 years of existence, has gratefully chosen to signalize its Catholic origin." He describes briefly the frontier French-Canadian settlement for which Father Galtier erected his chapel, and tells of European Catholics who later settled in the community. Among the subjects emphasized are the growth of railroads and the rise of James J. Hill, who "collaborated extensively with his close friend, Archbishop John Ireland, in building the solid superstructure of the Catholic archdiocese."

The centennial of the building of the Chapel of St. Paul is being marked by the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* through the daily publication of brief sketches of "Life in Minnesota in St. Paul's First Hundred Years." The opening article, which appears in the issue of May 16, quotes James M. Goodhue's first impressions of St. Paul from the *Minnesota Pioneer* of May 19, 1849. Many of the sketches that follow consist chiefly of quotations from contemporary newspapers. They were prepared by members of the writer's project of the Minnesota WPA.

Some information about the history of a St. Paul social service institution, the Neighborhood House, is included in a recent booklet about its activities (1941. 8 p.). It was founded, according to this account, in 1897, when the people of Mount Zion Temple organized a sewing class to help Jewish "refugees who had settled in what is now the site of Neighborhood House." Other groups, particularly Mexicans, have since settled in the vicinity, and the settlement house has been reorganized to meet their needs.

The history of the Franklin flour mill, which was established in 1886 by George and John Forsyth, is outlined in the *Franklin Tribune* for May 22. A picture of the original mill, a wooden structure that was destroyed by fire in 1913, accompanies the article. The rebuilding of the mill and the changes in its ownership are covered in the narrative.

A pamphlet reviewing the history of the Opdal Norwegian Lutheran Church, by its pastor, the Reverend T. H. Rossing, was published in connection with the celebration of its fiftieth anniversary on June 8 (48 p.). The story of the congregation is sketched against a background of Scandinavian settlement in Renville County and the Minnesota Valley. It is traced back to the period of the Sioux War and the years when itinerant missionaries served the needs of the settlers in the area.

The founding of an important Rice County industry, the Faribault Woolen Mills, is described in the *Faribault Daily News* for June 26. The firm was established by Carl H. Klemer, a German immigrant of 1848 who settled in Minnesota in 1857 and in Faribault in 1864. After practicing his trade of cabinet making for a time, he established a small factory where carding could be done for local wool growers. From this modest beginning in 1867, the present mill grew, despite setbacks caused by three disastrous fires.

A parish history of more than ordinary length and scope is Mary L. Hagerty's *Meet Shieldsville: The Story of St. Patrick's Parish* (1940. 174 p.). That the book is more than a church record is evident from a glance at the table of contents, which reveals that it contains sections on such subjects as "Irishmen Arrive," "Captain Dodd," "Business 1856-1885," "United States Mail," the organization of the county and the township, local school districts, "Village Ordinances," and

the "Dan Patch Airline." Unfortunately, however, this material is poorly organized, and is presented in haphazard fashion. Interspersed with these items are sections on St. Patrick's Church, its priests, its societies, and the like. More than half of the volume is devoted to biographical sketches.

The histories of two local congregations at Badger in Roseau County have been reviewed in recent issues of the *Herald-Rustler* of Badger. The first, which deals with the history of Our Savior's Congregation, a Norwegian Lutheran church established in 1901, appears in the issue for May 1. A Swedish congregation of the Augustana Synod, the Bethany Lutheran Church, is the subject of the second sketch, which appears in installments in the *Herald-Rustler* for May 8 and 15.

Local history has been the subject of numerous recent articles published in the magazine section of the Sunday issues of the *Duluth News-Tribune*. In the issue for April 13, for example, Orville E. Lomoe tells how "Duluth Won Its Pure Drinking Water." An account of the "Charles W. Wetmore," a whaleback steamer that sailed from Duluth, passed down the St. Lawrence, and crossed the Atlantic in 1891, is presented by Nathan Cohen on April 20. The prophetic speech made by Dr. Thomas Foster at Duluth on July 4, 1868, when he coined the phrase "Zenith City of the Unsalted Seas," is the subject of an article by Jack McBride published on June 29. The story of J. W. Durham of Roseau, a northern Minnesota pioneer who is said to be the "only remaining Confederate soldier living in the state," is reviewed by Henry Hess in the issue for May 25; and a sketch, by George T. Ness, Jr., of "Minnesota's First Graduate of West Point," James G. S. Snelling of the class of 1845, appears on June 29.

A useful "History of Land Platting in Duluth" by A. B. Horwitz, city planning engineer, appears in three installments in the issues of *Duluth Publicity* for June 21 and 28 and July 5. The narrative covers the period from 1856, when the plat of Oneota was recorded, through 1939. Just four years after the first section of the present city was platted, writes Mr. Horwitz, "there were, in the area which is now Duluth, eleven town sites, scattered along 17 miles of the waterfront between Lakeside and Fond du Lac." They provided "enough building sites for a population of 40,000." The writer records that

plating ceased with the Civil War, but that it was resumed about 1868. A period of great activity was that from 1885 to 1893, when the lumber industry was developing rapidly and the iron deposits of northeastern Minnesota were being discovered.

An interesting chapter in the banking history of southern Minnesota is outlined in an article on the First National Bank of Owatonna, which appears in the *Daily People's Press* of Owatonna for May 25. It calls attention to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the bank by William R. Kinyon and Jason C. Easton, and reviews the story of the connection of three generations of the Kinyon family with the bank.

A brief history of school district 88 in Todd County, written by the present pupils and their teacher, Mrs. Eugene Lindquist, is published in the *Clarissa Independent* for June 12. The school opened in 1884 with twelve pupils, who are named in this article, and a sixteen-year-old country girl, Minnie Siltman, as the teacher. The equipment was simple — benches and tables made of pine boards for the pupils, a chair for the teacher, a tin water bucket and cup, and a broom. The school building was a crude shack, but after two years a new log structure was erected at a cost of a hundred dollars.

A brief account of "Pioneer Days" and early settlers at Forest Lake is included in the 1941 number of the *Weston Opportunities Magazine*, a little publication issued at irregular intervals at Weston in Washington County. It tells of the founding of Forest Lake in 1855, of early events in the vicinity, of the building of the railroad, of early business enterprises, and of a summer hotel erected in 1876.

To commemorate its seventieth anniversary on June 11, the Swedish Baptist Church of Cokato published a pamphlet reviewing its history (23 p.). The church was established on June 11, 1871, by nine pioneers who met in a room above a hardware store. The charter members are named, and an account of their first meeting, based upon its minutes, is presented.



